Putting friends in high places p30
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What doesn't stay in Vegas p36

SEPTEMBER 2006

neatoday

Then and Now

What we've gained—and lost—over the past three decades.

New York teacher Richard Siegelman's class, in the 1960s and this decade.

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SEPTEMBER

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features

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Then and Now

Find yourself wishing for the "good old days"? Seriously, how much have schools and teaching changed in the last 30 years? Your colleagues reflect on the profession's gains (no more mimeographs!) and losses (not as much respect).

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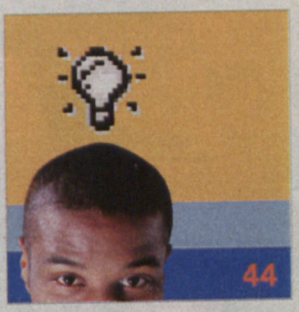

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Then and Now

When you look beyond the hairstyles and hemlines in the photos provided by Richard Siegelman, the New York teacher whose career is encapsulated on the cover of this month's issue, it's obvious how much has changed in our schools in the past generation. The same can be said of the magazine you're holding in your hands. ¶ This is the 25th anniversary year of *NEA Today*, which was launched in October 1982. ¶ Back then, *NEA Today* consisted of 24 pages, filled with all black-and-white photos and splashes of color to break up the gray. The first issue was mailed to about 1.6 million NEA members. ¶ Now, an average issue is 64 pages, reaches nearly 3 million NEA members, and virtually everything is in full color. Its format changed three years ago from a tabloid to a more traditional magazine size. The content's evolved too, reflecting 25 years of changes in our world, our society, and in public education. ¶ The cover of the debut issue of *NEA Today* highlighted the teacher layoffs that were sweeping the country. Inside were stories about the impact of California's infamous (and still relatively new) Proposition 13 and an interview with a member who had spent her entire career teaching seventh- and eighth-graders. ¶ Over the years, the look's changed, the content's changed, and the format's changed, but one thing hasn't changed at all. *NEA Today* began and continues today as a place where your voice, and the voices of all NEA members, can be heard.

BILL FISCHER

Now manager of manufacturing and production, Fischer has worked on NEA Today *for its entire 25-year history and served as its editor for 15 years.*

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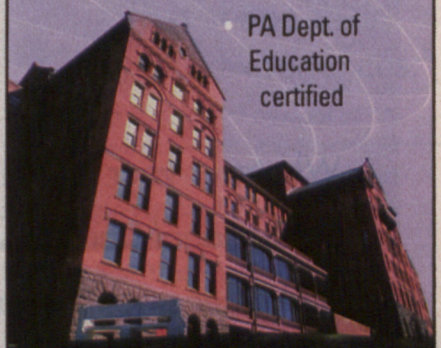

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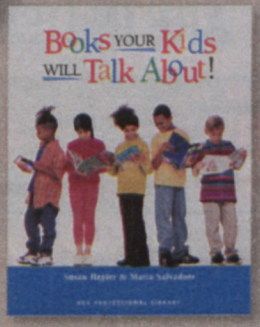

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Great Public Schools for Every Child

Schools' Changing Faces

Educators are on the front lines of a seismic shift in the makeup of America's public schools.

With a makeup of Hispanic, Anglo, and Russian cultures, the city of Woodburn is a case study in diversity and acceptance. Located 35 miles south of Portland, Oregon, this small agricultural town takes pride in being known as the "City of Unity."

In the downtown area, Mexican import shops, bakeries, and restaurants flourish. And nearby, Russian immigrants work their farms. In this community, where two-thirds of the students are English-language learners, meeting the needs of a diverse student population is a constant balancing act.

Over time, this school district has undergone a transformation, and it is not alone. In one rural district in Arkansas, students now speak 16 different languages, while the Houston Independent School District—the nation's seventh-largest public school system, with more than 210,000 students—is home to more than 80 languages.

In the last 30 years, a seismic shift has occurred in America's classrooms. Since 1980, the number of minority students enrolled in public schools has grown dramatically. The number of Hispanic students increased by 61 percent, the highest growth rate of any ethnic group. The Black student population grew by 16 percent, and other minority groups increased by 49 percent.

In some districts, the growth in minority student enrollment is more visible than in others. But diversity is our future, regardless of where you teach or work. Forty-five percent of the nation's children under 5 are racial or ethnic minorities, so the sweeping tide of change is inevitable.

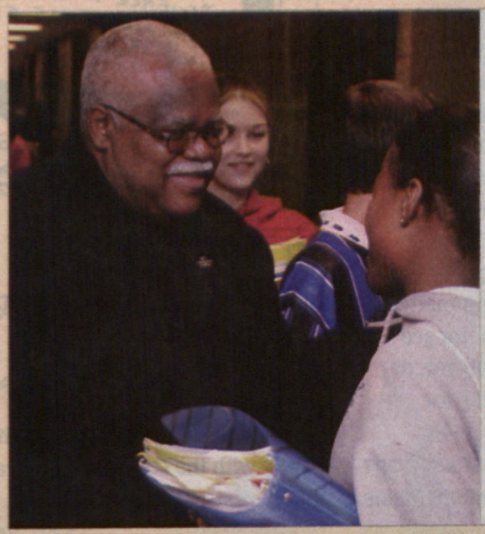
Today's educators are expected not only to teach a more diverse student body than ever before, but also to help all children reach high achievement standards. Public schools are at the center of this demographic trend, and we are on the front lines in figuring out how to respond to this new reality.

Many of the issues faced by educators in Woodburn are mirrored in schools across the country. The question of how to integrate the diverse cultures of students effectively in the classroom and into the curriculum and school programs is on the minds of NEA members from North Carolina to Nebraska.

First and foremost, we have to see the changing faces—and voices—in America's public schools as an asset, not a hurdle to overcome. We must actively work to understand the cultures of our students in a meaningful way, and recognize the beliefs, values, and behaviors that shape their learning experiences.

Team NEA, as you gear up for an exciting new year, let's recommit to giving every child our best, each and every day. High expectations yield high achievement, and we should accept nothing less.

It is also important to expose children to a diverse teaching staff within each of our schools. Every child has a basic right to a great public school with a qualified and caring staff, including educators who look like them, who share similar cultural experiences, and who can serve as role models demonstrating that education and achievement are things to be respected.



"We must actively work to understand the cultures of our students in a meaningful way, and recognize the beliefs, values, and behaviors that shape their learning experiences."

—REG WEAVER

Where school districts are having success, they embrace the spirit of diversity by taking concrete steps to respond to change. They create policies to strengthen professional development programs with an emphasis on cultural competency and mentoring. They focus on the targeted recruitment of faculty of color. And they develop partnerships with minority communities to learn more about their students' cultures.

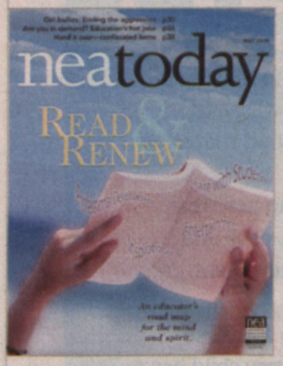
Diversity is—and has always been—one of this country's greatest strengths. As educators, we have a responsibility to be leaders in creating classrooms that are fair and inclusive, and that advance this nation's most treasured ideals. If not now, when?

Have a great year, and thank you for all you do to make great public schools a reality for all children and students!

Reg Weaver

NEA PRESIDENT REG WEAVER

SUMMER READING



I work at Hebbville Elementary School, the home of the Heavenly Honies Book Club profiled in the May cover story, "Read and Renew." In the past, I never thought I had time to sit and read, but after reading the article and learning about the benefits of joining a professional book club, I've become inspired. I enjoyed reading on my own this summer and plan on joining the club in September!

TOWANDA DAVENPORT
Windsor Mill, Maryland

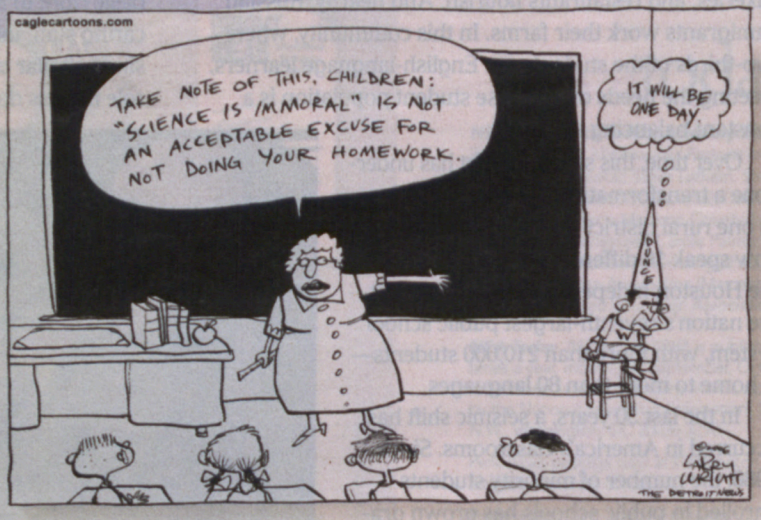
Several months ago, I read an NEA article on book clubs. This got me to thinking—how can I encourage my students to read for pleasure, when I can't find the time myself? I decided to make some trips to the local library and bookstore. Now, I find myself stepping out of that box and reading all different styles of writing. Thank you, NEA, for inspiring me to practice what I preach!

MICHELLE CHRISTENSEN
Salisbury, Maryland

As glad as I am to see an article on reading, I am concerned that I hardly ever read in *NEA Today* about the importance of the school library. As a librarian, I provide collection development, knowledge of searching and sources of information, individual and classroom instruction on search strategies, bibliographic instruction, book talking, resource location, and source evaluation strategies. I teach and collaborate with willing teachers.

[However], the amazing part of my job is that none of my training matters when classroom teachers do not see library skills and use as important, or that instruction needs to occur for good use to result.

PEGGY BECKSVOORT
Falmouth, Maine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LARRY WRIGHT
THE DETROIT NEWS

DRUG CONFUSION

Your May article about the Medicare Part D prescription drug coverage was so completely negative. You should have included those of us who are extremely happy with the coverage and grateful that it exists.

GAIL HOBMANN
Westlake Village, California

SALARY SENSE

I most heartily agree with the comments ("TalkBack," May) on the ridiculous pay of school administrators. Administrators are support personnel and should be paid as such, with the higher salaries going to the "teachers who do the essential job...." Administrators also should answer to teachers rather than being their evaluators. Administrators often have had only minimal time teaching in the classroom. Who are they to critique the job of teacher? Or hire and fire? It is the teachers who should be evaluating the administrator.

VIRGINIA WILKINS
Denver, Colorado

NCLB REFORM

Thank you again for your April cover story about NCLB (which included a piece on how frequent testing has interfered with learning in my classroom.) *NEA Today* made a big splash in our district, both in terms of empowering

CYBER COMMENTARY

MySpace? OurProblem

I've been looking at MySpace for some time now, and indeed, there are a myriad of problems there—online sexual predators being the least of them. There are sophisticated hacks going on (phishing attacks for logins/passwords), redirects to other sites (usually porn), profile impersonations. Indeed, MySpace isn't a place for kiddies!

[Still], the problem is that politicians in particular and Americans in general think that shutting down a site is an answer to security issues.

—Posted to NEA message boards, in response to a question about proposed legislation to limit student access to networking Web sites.

WANT TO WEIGH IN?

Chat with your colleagues on NEA's discussion boards at **www.neatoday.org/talkback.html**.

CARTOON: LARRY WRIGHT/THE DETROIT NEWS

our union and in getting a little more respect for us from the administration!

After its publication, our union developed a questionnaire asking members what their schools required in terms of NCLB practices—teaching to the test, graphing test results, and so on. When confronted with the results, the administration totally backpedaled—claiming teachers had requested the testing, graphing, practices, etc., or that hmm... perhaps principals were requiring these things. Then, we confronted our curriculum council: "We are teaching to the test and we don't have time to teach the curriculum you pay us to teach!" became our rallying cry.

Soon after, we got word from above that District 45 teaches curriculum only, which is standards-based, and that we don't teach to the test in our district. News to us!

CHERYL CHAPMAN
Villa Park, Illinois

Thanks for the comprehensive coverage of the NCLB plague that shadows our land. My name for the Reading First program, which tests for one week out of every five, is "Testing First." Ironically, this is the first year in my seven years of teaching primary [school] that my second-graders don't have phonics workbooks. Our budget couldn't (or wouldn't) cover it. But how much do these constant tests we have cost? Isn't it time for a "Test Party" in the spirit of the Boston Tea Party?

CAROL HAMILTON
Lancaster, California

GIVE THEM A BREAK!

The question of how to keep children quieter at lunch was raised in *NEA Today* (Bulletin Board, April), and one member answered that her students, if they didn't quiet down after a few warnings, had to eat their lunch in silence. Give the kids a break! They have to be quiet in the classroom. Let them blow off a little steam at lunch. We adults don't have to be bossy every minute.

HOLLY GAREMORE
Pine Hill, New Jersey

CORRECTION

A May People item misspelled the name of Civil War-era photographer Mathew Brady.

MEMBER IN THE NEWS

"[NCLB] HAS SUCKED THE JOY out of teaching. But we believe that to moan and groan is not enough—we need to be activists."

CALIFORNIA TEACHERS ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT BARBARA KERR
RA Today, *July 4, 2006.*

LET'S TALK

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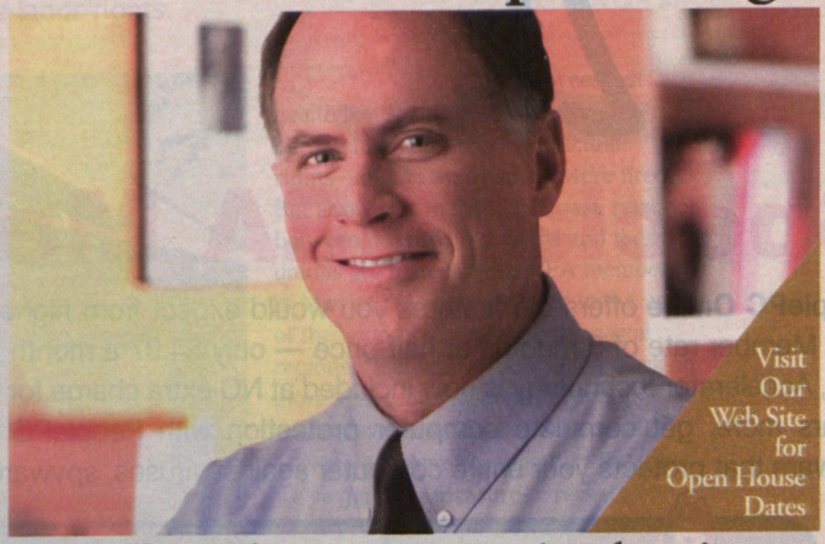

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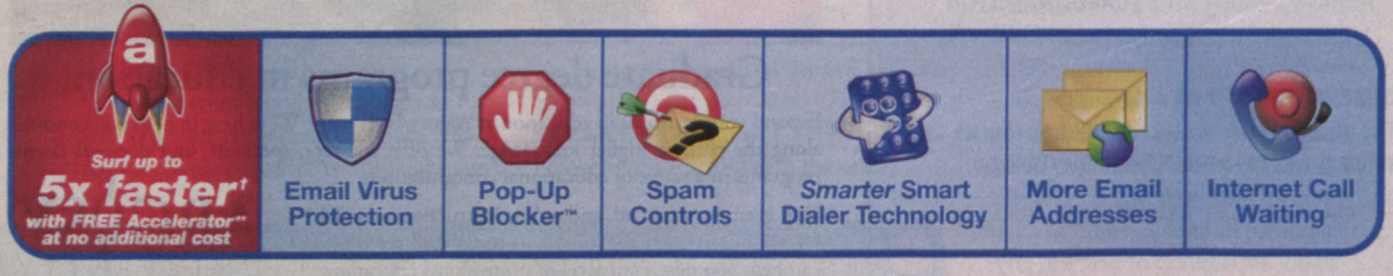

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Katrina's Widening Wake

With their entire community destroyed after Hurricane Katrina, and loved ones and students scattered or missing, the 7,000 teachers and education support professionals in New Orleans knew that recovery efforts would be immense. But they didn't anticipate the state using the disaster to undermine labor rights.

IN NEW ORLEANS, employees lost health insurance, tenure, collective bargaining, and other contractual rights—and, in many cases, were fired. But elsewhere in the Gulf Coast, relations between heavily hit districts and their unions are better. While NEA members in Mississippi were scattered in the wake of the widespread damage to coastal regions, "if anything, people are working more with union leaders," says high school teacher Michael Marks, an NEA Executive Committee member. "I think we've gained a measure of respect."

A year after Katrina struck, educators across the region are still struggling to pull their schools and lives back together. "We still have people and members who are homeless, facilities that are not at full strength," says Marks. Mississippi education officials estimate the damage at $1 billion, and in some cases, individual schools still play host to two or three others too damaged to use. "We still need help," Marks says.

In New Orleans alone, schools sustained an estimated $880 million in damage, including almost all buses. Of the city's 128 schools, only 25 operated this past year—and most of those morphed into charter schools. A 65,000-student population plummeted to 12,500. State officials guess that about 22,000 might return this year. The rest remain in Texas, Georgia, Florida, and beyond.

12 DETERMINED TO GET A BETTER DEAL

14 THE FIGHT AGAINST CENSORSHIP

16 MOSQUITO RING TONES

PHOTO TOP: CYNTHIA KOPKOWSKI

To the Edge, Then Upward

With a living wage on the table and the Champaign (Illinois) school board refusing to accept it, the Champaign-ESP bargaining unit was just 15 minutes away from a strike this past spring. They were that determined to get a better deal for their friends and colleagues living in poverty—and they did.

IN THE FACE of solidarity and grit, the school board voted for 17 to 20 percent raises over three years for some of the district's lowest-paid support professionals, including food service and transportation workers.

It came down to a few tense moments, but the campaign started more than a year ago when Champaign-ESP (CESP) joined the Champaign County Living Wage Association. Because CESP supports other unions' struggles through the Association, "they'll work with us on public education issues. This is not just about what you get—it's about what others get. It all fits together," says Illinois Education Association-NEA UniServ Director Gene Vanderport. And, when a living wage becomes the regional employment standard, he adds, "that undercuts the ability of low-wage private companies to successfully bid on school system contracts."

Bottom line is, Vanderport says, "solidarity works for you."

STUDY THIS

THE TORTOISE WINS!

Can your child forgo a small toy today in exchange for a big one tomorrow? When she makes a promise, can you count on her to keep it? If so, a new study says a bright academic future may be ahead.

WHEN IT COMES to academic success, natural intelligence may not matter as much as forbearance and self-discipline, according to a recent study in the journal *Psychological Science* that measured the IQ, study habits, and personal fortitude of more than 300 students. In particular, the ability to delay gratification was characteristic of good students.

But who helps cultivate this trait—parents or teachers? "We don't know, but I wouldn't be surprised if it was some kind of cooperation," said study co-author Angela Duckworth, a doctoral student at the University of Pennsylvania.

—ALAN J. MCCOMBS

PHOTO TOP: IMAGE SOURCE; PHOTO BOTTOM: GEORGE DOYLE

When the Landlord Knocks...

So you've finally got that first paycheck! Great! Buy yourself dinner and a pair of comfortable shoes, and—oh, yeah—don't forget to write the rent check. What's that? You can't afford the rent?

YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONE. As housing costs continue to rise, especially in and near cities, many teachers worry over the rent. (Never mind the mortgage!) In response, some school districts are tackling housing costs on their own: In New York City this year, new math, science, and special education teachers will get a one-time $5,000 housing bonus, plus $400 a month for two years. (In return, teachers commit to three years in a high-needs school.) In California, the Santa Clara Unified School District actually built apartments for teachers five years ago. Another option, especially for the would-be home buyer, is the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's "Teacher Next Door" program, which allows teachers to buy houses in revitalization areas for 50 percent off. (For more info, see: www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/reo/goodn/tnd.cfm.)

FIRST 5 YEARS

BUT STILL, WE LIKE THIS IDEA: PAY TEACHERS MORE!

50

[STATISTIC]
The number of **SCHOOLS** ordered to undergo radical **'RESTRUCTURING'** under NCLB, including mass firings or state takeovers.

SOURCE: ASSOCIATED PRESS

SPEEDY RECOVERY

MAYBE WE'RE NIT-PICKING...

BUT IS IT CRAZY that students can come to school with lice? In the wake of the No Child Left Behind law, and its emphasis on attendance and test preparation, school districts are revising their policies to allow students to return faster after lice infestations. Instead of a doctor's note, some just need to bring a box top from an over-the-counter lice treatment. "This is not a Third World country," one angry mother in Sherman Oaks, California, told *The Wall Street Journal*. "Why would we lower our standards?"

Notepad

Say Welcome!

More than 525,000 educators joined NEA this summer, after New York leaders approved a merger between the National Education Association of New York and the New York State United Teachers. Now, with 3.2 million members, NEA is the largest labor union in American history.

"Our coming together will give public education, and public school educators, a stronger voice in the classroom, in the state legislature, and at the national level," NEA President Reg Weaver said.

NCLB: A Failure?

The so-called No Child Left Behind law is failing to close racial achievement gaps, and it also has failed to improve reading and math achievement overall, despite White House claims to the contrary, according to a recent Harvard study.

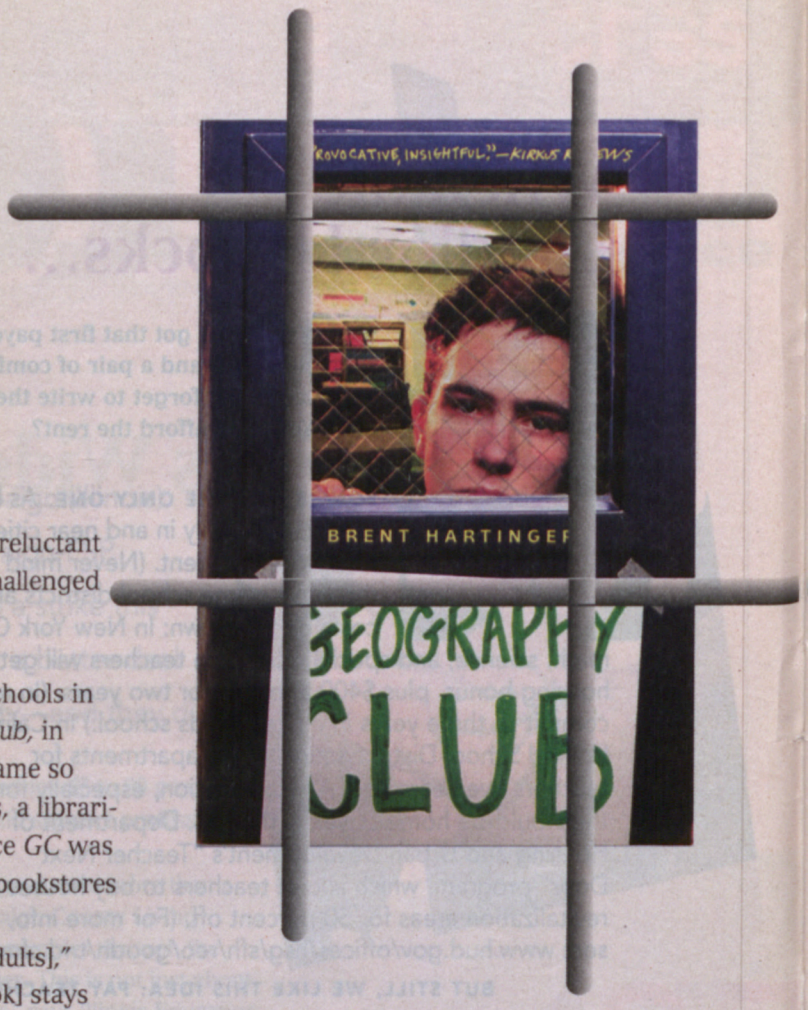
The study, done by Harvard's Civil Rights Project, said the national average of achievement has been flat in reading since 2001 and the growth rate in math is the same as before NCLB. The study also predicted that NCLB would fail to meet its 2014 goals—only 24 to 34 percent of students will meet the reading proficiency goal under current trends, including less than 25 percent of poor and Black students.

Have a great idea?

> Send it by mail:
NEA Today
1201 16th St., N.W.,
Washington, DC 20036

> Send it by e-mail:
neatoday@nea.org

ILLUSTRATION TOP: JASON O'MALLEY; PHOTO BOTTOM: TIM FLACH



Rebel Readers

What do Toni Morrison, J.D. Salinger, and Judy Blume have in common?

BESIDES BEING AUTHORS beloved by hard-core and reluctant readers alike, their titles are among the top 10 most-challenged works of 2005, according to the American Library Association.

But censorship efforts often backfire. Recently, schools in University Place, Washington, banned *Geography Club,* in which a group of gay students form a club (with a name so boring that nobody else would show up.) Bob Koreis, a librarian at nearby Federal Way High School, said that once *GC* was pulled from school shelves, other local libraries and bookstores couldn't keep it in stock.

"Kids are so much better at selling books [than adults]," Koreis said. "Once word-of-mouth happens, [the book] stays checked out." (Talk about promoting a culture of reading!)

To fight censorship, Koreis says it's crucial to have a plan and a standing committee in place prior to a challenge. He also promotes Banned Books Week (September 23–30) by wrapping books in chains and other attention-getting displays. Find your inspiration at www.ala.org/bbooks.

WHAT YOU PAY FOR

SEATTLE SCHOOLS GET HELPING HAND FROM NEA

Just ordering educators to close the achievement gaps for minority and low-income students is one thing. Giving them $250,000 with the promise of another $1 million later to work toward that goal is quite another.

Unlike some politicians, the NEA Foundation opted for the latter, giving Seattle Public Schools a $250,000 grant, renewable annually over the next four years, for use in its city schools. Grant money will be used to improve literacy, math, and science achievement; reduce dropouts and truancy; and help end the disproportionate referral of minorities to special education. The money will also help retain quality staff and pay for programs to engage families and the community in education. Seattle has until 2011 to close the achievement gaps under the grant—a deadline, but one backed up by cold, hard cash.

A Test of Faith

Considering the number of times the current Administration invokes faith, it may be surprising to hear the National Council of Churches criticize federal policies on public education. But in a recent statement, the Council pointed to "Ten Moral Concerns in the Implementation of No Child Left Behind."

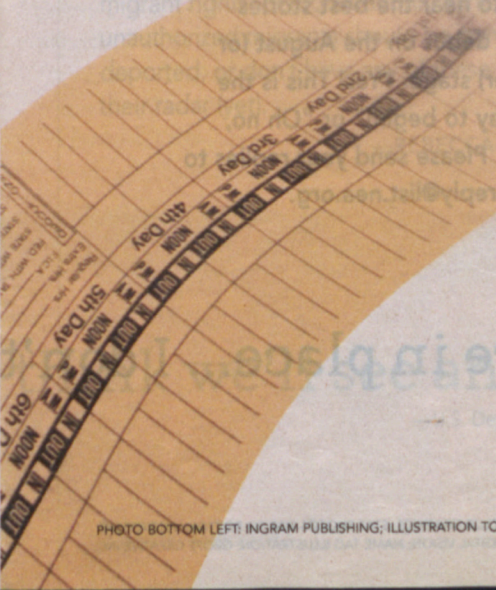
For one thing, with its idyllic demand that every child be proficient in reading and math by 2014, the law is setting public education up for failure, says the ecumenical group, which represents more than 100,000 local congregations. For another, the law unfairly shames children—by labeling some "a failing group" in a "failing school." Even worse, the churches point out that "NCLB makes demands on states and school districts without fully funding reforms that would...close achievement gaps."

"Christian faith demands, as a matter of justice and compassion, that we be concerned about public schools," the Council says. "As people of faith, we do not view our children as products to be tested and managed, but instead as unique human beings to be nurtured and educated."

[STATISTIC]

The percentage of U.S. **CHILDREN** who are **MINORITIES** [an all-time high, driven mostly by growth among Hispanics].

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS



CAUSE OR EFFECT?

UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

After spending $10 million a year on substitutes, Chicago Public Schools announced it will begin publicizing teacher attendance rates at its schools this year. Typically, Chicago teachers miss an average of 12 days during the school year (about twice as much as employees in private industry, according to surveys). But rather than shining the interrogator's light, union officials suggested a better strategy to district officials: Consider why teachers at some schools are frequently sick or stressed out and try to improve those conditions.

Capitol Report

Your Right To Vote

With pressure from NEA and other civil rights groups, Congress renewed three critical sections of the historic 1965 Voting Rights Act (VRA) in July, ensuring the voting rights of millions of racial, ethnic, and language minority citizens.

"NEA believes the right to vote, and to have one's vote counted, is the most basic tenet of a democratic society," NEA President Reg Weaver wrote to Congress, in a series of letters that encouraged lawmakers to pass the bipartisan reauthorization bill. NEA members also bombarded their Senators and Representatives with more than 2,200 e-mails, marched in Atlanta to "Keep the Vote Alive," and joined a national petition.

Although the VRA has been successful, lingering inequities and obstacles made it necessary to reauthorize the law. The three sections, which expired this year, work to prevent voting practices with a discriminatory purpose or effect; to require language assistance to voters in some areas; and to authorize the federal government to use election observers.

The bill, which extends the VRA for another 25 years, was signed into law by President Bush on July 27. For more information, go to www.nea.org/lac.

Have a great idea?

> Send it by mail:
NEA Today
1201 16th St., N.W.,
Washington, DC 20036

> Send it by e-mail:
neatoday@nea.org

PHOTO BOTTOM LEFT: INGRAM PUBLISHING; ILLUSTRATION TOP: DYNAMIC GRAPHICS; PHOTO BOTTOM CENTER: CORBIS

All the better to hear you with, my dear

Have you heard the buzz about the Mosquito ring tones? Or more to the point, can you hear them at all?

U.K. INVENTOR Howard Stapleton originally developed his Mosquito technology—a high-pitched, nails-on-blackboard sound that can only be heard by youngish ears—to repel teenagers from loitering at a storefront.

But turning the idea inside-out and using the frequency as a cell phone ring tone that goes undetected by teachers has a lot more currency with the kids—and is a handy end-run around anti-phone school policies. There's no defined cutoff point, but most adults of a certain age hear dead silence when the tone is played.

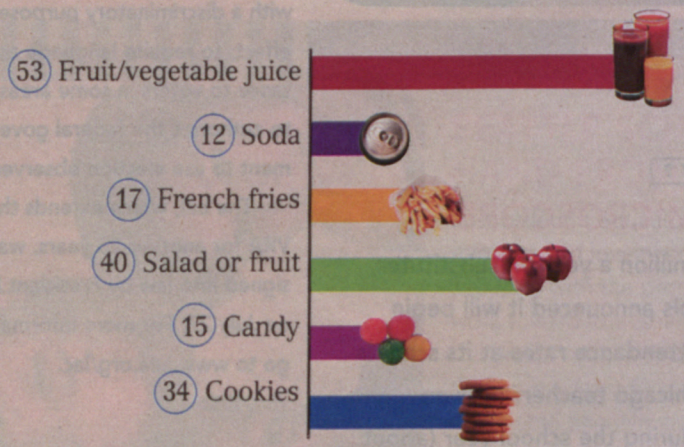
Outgoing Student Program President Mandy Plucker is eight years out of high school and downloads ring tones from the Dixie Chicks and the Clash—but not the Mosquito. "It sounds like at the end of the night, when the TV goes off—*bzzz*," says Plucker. "It's high-pitched, almost like a continuous cricket, but long and steady. It reminds me of when they test your hearing."

Want to know if you're losing your hearing? Listen in (or try to) at: www.freemosquitoringtone.com.

VITAL STATS

COUNTING CALORIES

The **PERCENTAGE** of public elementary schools selling these foods:



SOURCE: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

VOICES

FIRST DAYS

What happens on the first day of school? The little ones cry. (Their teachers might too...) Sometimes there's chaos. Sometimes magic. Switches get thrown. Lights go on. The curtain goes up. We want to hear the best stories from your debut on the August (or September) stage. "Yes! This is the perfect way to begin!" or "Oh no, already!?" Please send your replies to neatoday-reply@list.nea.org.

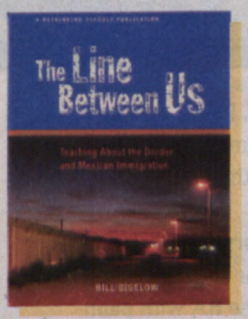
"The concrete pillars of NCLB are in place... I don't

PHOTO GIRL TOP: JACK HOLLINGSWORTH; MOSQUITO ILLUSTRATION: IMAGE CLUB GRAPHICS; STAT PHOTOS TOP TO BOTTOM: PHOTODISC, JOHN A. RIZZO, RYAN MCVAY, PHOTODISC, SPIKE MAFFORD, DIGITAL VISION; NAME TAG ILLUSTRATION: GROFF CREATIVE INC

BOOK FOCUS

Something there is that doesn't love a wall

WHEN ROBERT FROST wrote that good fences make good neighbors, surely he couldn't fathom an era of National Guard troops constructing barbed wire ones on our southern border. With immigration legislation taking center stage in recent debates, the publication of *The Line Between Us* couldn't be more timely. In characteristic style, Rethinking Schools' (www.rethinkingschools.org) Bill Bigelow, an Oregon high school teacher, offers thoughtful narratives about his own U.S.-Mexico relations curriculum.



Detailed lesson plans include a role-play set during the 19th century U.S.-Mexico war; the "The Transnational Capital Auction Game" to facilitate understanding of globalization; and border improvisations on topics like "Speak Spanish!" "Neighborhood organizing," and "Water or jail." Other resources include a Bill Clinton speech on NAFTA, poetry on hunger, and migrant-themed comics. *The Line* is a practical tool that shows how critical and creative inquiry by teachers and students leads to real learning, whether your students joined migrant rights' demonstrations, think unauthorized migrants should be punished and deported, or don't have any of these issues on their radar (yet).

—REBECCA L. WEBER

Q&A

QUESTIONS FOR Angelina Jolie

EDUCATION FOR ALL

Actress and *People* magazine's "Most Beautiful Woman" in the world Angelina Jolie talked to *NEA Today* last spring about education around the globe. She was in Namibia at the time, awaiting one very famous baby. But other children were also on her mind: The 100 million worldwide who never attend school.

You've visited refugee camps and villages in Africa, Asia, and Bosnia as an ambassador for the United Nations' High Refugee Commission. What disturbs you most on those visits?

ANSWER: Seeing children sitting idle with nothing to do! It's just one of the saddest things, seeing a little life...going to go to waste. Children are either going to get an education and become better people—understanding their rights, taking care of their family, [participating in] democracy—or they'll be left to sit.

In your travels, do you see education changing children?

ANSWER: You see kids who have every reason to hate get to school and get happy. They're talking about becoming doctors or learning about law....On a personal note, my daughter's from Ethiopia, and that's a country where the number of children going to school has doubled, but 6 million still sit out every day. It's a very personal thing to me when I see my daughter learning, getting ready to expand her mind. She's a real bright kid, [but] she'd have had no chance.

Your every move is under incredible scrutiny. How do you turn that attention from you and your family to causes that are important to you?

ANSWER: I'm a public person, but I've tried when I can to shed some light on good things. I came from privilege, growing up in Los Angeles, and didn't know how much I should appreciate in life. Now I want my children to grow up seeing the world as it really is, not just one corner.

The National Education Association and Education International, of which NEA is a member, are campaigning for Education For All. To learn more about efforts to improve education worldwide, visit www.nea.org/international. Also, watch for the PBS premiere on September 5 of "Time for School"; for more information, see page 66.

think we'll see any major changes."

—U.S. Department of Education Assistant Secretary **Tom Luce** in an address to education writers in New Orleans in June.

JOLIE PHOTO: AP/WIDEWORLD

'No More Excuses'

Delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly left with a charge to bring the push for great public schools back to their communities.

Delegates to this summer's NEA Representative Assembly return to their schools with a message—no more excuses. Not for lawmakers, not for parents, and not for educators. "There are no more excuses," NEA President Reg Weaver told delegates. "There are no more excuses for children and students who are not learning. Every American has a shared responsibility to create quality public schools, and no American should tolerate any excuses for why educators aren't given the tools and resources they need to get the job done."

In his keynote address, Weaver urged educators to remember why they entered the profession. "Public education only has room for those who have a passion for teaching and learning," he said. "Public education only has room for those who are truly committed. Public education only has room for those who believe that every child can learn and that great public schools are the basic right of every child." NEA members, he added, must take "personal responsibility" in building community support for efforts to ensure that every student has access to a quality public education.

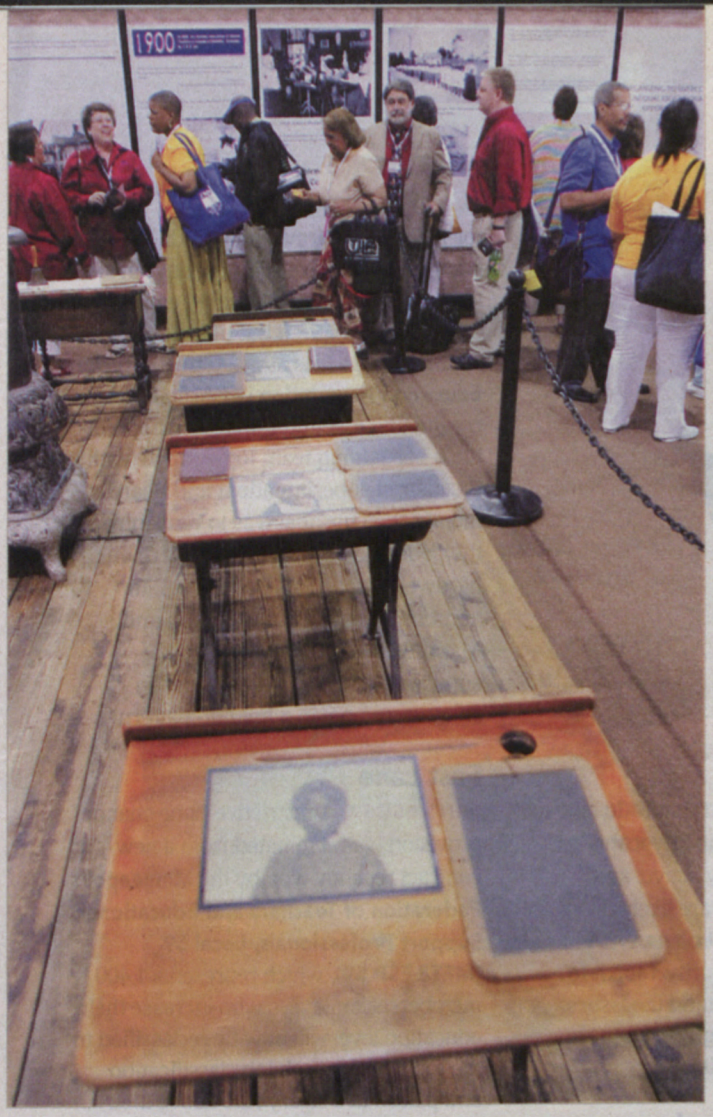
That's the approach delegates agreed to take in reforming the Bush Administration's version of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the so-called No Child Left Behind law (NCLB), which is up for reauthorization by Congress in 2007. The comprehensive, grassroots agenda approved by delegates advocates for great public schools for every child, and would provide for preK and kindergarten programs, nutrition and health care programs to mitigate the effects of poverty, and a rich curriculum that fosters critical thinking and includes important subjects not tested under NCLB. It also calls for a sound accountability system that relies on multiple measures of success and rewards improvement rather than punishing already struggling schools.

Nearly 70 percent of NEA members surveyed disapprove of NCLB, and 57 percent want to see major changes in the law. To help make that happen, delegates left the RA with palm-sized cards to share with colleagues, listing five things every member can do to help fix NCLB. They include e-mailing your member of Congress, making a contribution to the NEA Fund for Children and Public Education, posting personal stories at www.nea.org/esea, writing letters to the editor, and getting the

RA '06: Charting Tomorrow's Course

The educator-activists who packed the Orange County Convention Center for the 85th Representative Assembly poured their energy into shaping NEA's agenda for the upcoming year—and beyond. During the four-day meeting, delegates:

CONSIDERED THE BIG PICTURE. Delegates approved a vision, mission, and core values for the Association, which will drive its strategic initiatives and guide members in a common direction for years to come. The vision: a great public school for every student. The mission: to advocate for education professionals and to unite NEA members and the nation to fulfill the promise of public education to prepare



word out to other NEA members.

Weaver stressed that the Association continues focusing its efforts on five strategic goals: closing the gaps in student achievement; reaching out to ethnic minority communities; ensuring that teachers have a minimum salary of $40,000 and providing a living wage for education support professionals; expanding membership to offer support to more education employees; and working to achieve adequacy and equity in public school funding.

"We all have a responsibility to create quality public schools, and lawmakers are no exception," Weaver said. "Great public schools depend on educators, parents, community leaders, and members of Congress, and none of us should be making any excuses for not living up to that task."

For complete coverage of this year's Representative Assembly, visit www.nea.org/annualmeeting/raaction. nea

Clockwise from Left: NEA President **Reg Weaver** addresses delegates to the assembly; NEA members vote on the RA floor; remembering our past at the NEA-ATA merger exhibit; delegates prepare for the next session; the view from the back of the hall.

every student to succeed in a diverse and interdependent world. The core values: equal opportunity, a just society, democracy, professionalism, partnership, and collective action.

COMMITTED TO ACTION. Delegates approved an array of New Business Items, including measures addressing arts education, changes to Medicare Part D, and threats to academic freedom. They also passed a resolution calling for protection of families, English classes for immigrants, and opposition to policies that hinder workers' ability to organize. (For more on NEA Resolutions, see page 50.)

ELECTED LEADERS. NEA Secretary-Treasurer Lily Eskelsen and Executive Committee members Mark Cebulski and Carolyn Crowder won new terms.

BROKE A RECORD. Delegates far exceeded their 2006 fundraising goal for the NEA Fund for Children and Public Education, bringing in nearly $1.53 million for the PAC (see "Packing a Punch," page 30). In response to fundraising challenges, Wisconsin Education Association Council President Stan Johnson made good on a promise to shave the mustache he'd sported since eighth grade, and Louisiana Education Association Executive Director Bruce Hunt etched a small tattoo of a fleur-de-lis on his shoulder.

HONORED THEIR OWN. Delegates recognized 2006 Teacher of the Year Kimberly Oliver, a kindergarten teacher at Broad Acres Elementary School in Maryland; honored Nancy Toombs, NEA's ESP of the Year, a custodian supervisor at South Heights Elementary in Henderson, Kentucky, and an at-large ESP member of the NEA Board of Directors; and welcomed 10 international guests from South America, Africa, Europe, and Asia. NEA also presented its Friend of Education Award to the Tom Joyner Foundation, which has raised more than $35 million for students at historically Black colleges and universities across the nation.

LENT A HAND. More than 300 NEA volunteers helped paint, landscape, and clean up Orlando's Eccleston Elementary School as part of the annual Outreach to Teach event; others took time out to read to local children as part of NEA's Read Across America program.

LOOKED BACK. Members celebrated the 40th anniversary of the merger between NEA and the American Teachers Association, which transformed both the Association and education for Black students throughout the South and Southeast.

SENT A MESSAGE. More than 11,000 of them, in fact. Throughout the four-day event, the Legislative Action Center sent about 11,000 messages from delegates to Congress and collected more than 1,000 personal stories about how NCLB has affected educators' lives. In hers, Amanda Knowles, a high school science teacher from Washington, said that she is leaving the profession because of pressures related to testing. Stories like Knowles' will be instrumental in NEA's efforts to change the law.

PHOTOS: SCOTT ISKOWITZ, CALVIN KNIGHT, RICK RUNION

state REPORT

Secure Retirement Secured

COLORADO **The Colorado Education Association (CEA)** played a leadership role in preserving the state pension plan that covers teachers and other public employees. As part of the Colorado Coalition for Retirement Security, an alliance of 10 employee groups and unions, CEA members rallied against the governor, state treasurer, and legislators to fight a proposed referendum that would have kept new state employees out of the existing defined-benefit plan, which guarantees a set retirement income based on years of service and salary. Anti-pension advocates were proposing a new defined-contribution plan, in which the state only would put money into an employee's retirement account, but that account would not guarantee a set retirement income.

NEA has joined other national public employee organizations and pro-retirement security groups to defend retirement security. Along with the Association, coalition members include the Council of Institutional Investors, the National Conference on Public Employee Retirement Systems, the National Council on Teacher Retirement, the National Association of State Retirement Administrators, and other labor organizations, such as the AFL-CIO, AFSCME, AFT, IAFF, and SEIU. The group aims to give state organizations the information they need to fight their battles. In Colorado, coalition members coordinated research, training, and advertisements.

Despite victories in Colorado and elsewhere, anti-pension advocates are becoming increasingly active, and attacks in other states are likely. To defend defined-benefit plans, NEA has built a Retirement Security Toolkit to help members understand the issues. Find it at www.nea.org/retired/tools/publications.html#toolkit.

Starting Pay Upped

PENNSYLVANIA After almost two years of negotiations, the **York County Vocational-Technical Education Association (YCVTEA)** has won a starting teacher salary increase of nearly $10,000. "We are in a declining teacher market," says Clinton Gibbs, the UniServ representative and bargaining team leader. "To attract qualified teachers, board members recognized the need to advance salaries." Over five years, new teacher salaries will rise from their 2004–05 level of $32,000 to approximately $42,000—60 percent of the school's highest career rate, which will be $70,044 in 2010.

Three Down, Two To Go

KENTUCKY After more than a year's work in five counties, the Kentucky Eastern Region Living Wage Campaign is reaping rewards. A new contract in Lawrence County awards education support professionals a 4 percent salary increase—double the state pay hike—in the first year, as well as an additional $5 for extra duty bus runs, reimbursement for meals while traveling on school business, and two additional days in sick leave benefits for all classified employees. **Lawrence ESP (LESP)** President Johnny Boggs was assisted by **Kentucky Education Association (KEA)** staff in conducting a petition drive and appointing a bargaining team to negotiate with the district superintendent and board members. "Our goal was to recognize the dedication and commitment of our hardworking ESPs," Boggs says. In addition to Lawrence, Johnson and Magoffin counties signed similar contracts, while Floyd and Martin counties remain in a holding pattern.

Fast Lane

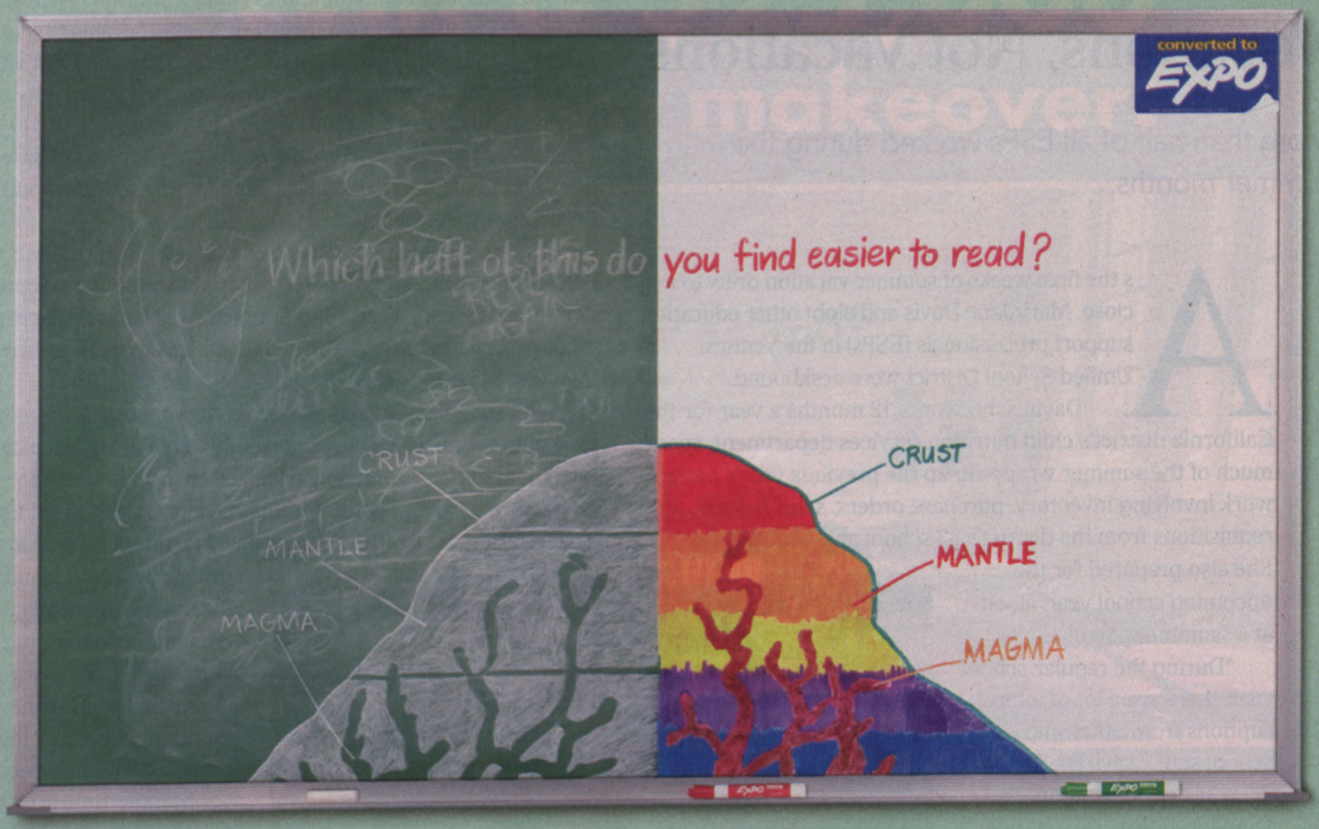
MINNESOTA A restrictive "lane change" provision was eliminated from a new contract recently won by the **Minneapolis Federation of Teachers and Educational Support Professionals, Local 59 (MFT&ESP 59),** which represents 1,400 members. Employees who increase their education level will now be reclassified to the top lane for each job classification and placed at a salary rate above their current wage. "This enhances career opportunities for our members and puts the best employee in a job opening," says union President Rick Norby.

Faculty, ESPs Unionized

OREGON Full-time faculty at Umpqua Community College in Roseburg recently voted overwhelmingly in favor of union representation by the **Oregon Education Association (OEA).** The vote tally was 48 to 6 in a full-time unit of 64. In a separate election, the college's 139-member classified bargaining unit also voted, 97 to 15, in favor of collective bargaining with OEA.

Pocketbook Policymaking

WASHINGTON Delegates to the 2006 **Washington Education Association (WEA)** Representative Assembly voted to increase dues by $1 per month for one year to create a fund for addressing health and safety issues at schools. In particular, they want to assess indoor air quality in the workplace. About $800,000 is expected to be raised, says Jerry Painter, WEA general counsel.



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Vocations, Not Vacations

More than half of all ESPs worked during the summer months.

As the final weeks of summer vacation drew to a close, Mary Jane Davis and eight other education support professionals (ESPs) in the Ventura Unified School District were deskbound.

Davis, who works 12 months a year for the California district's child nutrition services department, spent much of the summer wrapping up the previous year's paperwork involving inventory, purchase orders, sales reports, and requisitions from the district's 33 school and contract sites. She also prepared for the upcoming school year, albeit at a "summer pace."

"During the regular school year, there are a lot of interruptions from office and school staff," says Davis, a 28-year district veteran. "Summertime is slower, which gives me time to organize."

But as summer's end approached, she worked feverishly to stock the district's food warehouse for the fall. "The food has to be delivered before school begins," she says. "If we are out of stock, we can't just say to the students, 'come back later, it's on back order.'"

Mary Jane Davis says working during summer is not as hectic as the regular school year, "but sometimes you miss the noise."

Feeding students is just one reason more than half of all ESPs work during at least part of the traditional vacation months. They wax floors, paint buildings, overhaul bus engines, repair old roofs, and generally de-bug, de-plug, and de-clog. About 22 percent of ESPs are 12-month employees, while another 36 percent work 10-month schedules, which often include such summer school roles as paraprofessionals, cooks, bus drivers, custodians, and secretaries.

While many ESPs value spending vacation time with their families, those working in summer programs help give other kids "a safe, structured, learning environment that they otherwise might not have during summer," says Karen Mahurin, president of the National Council of ESPs. "Having year-round employees also cuts back on school vandalism," she adds.

Jeanette Martinez is an education technician who doesn't worry about her school getting trashed. She works in one of the safest school environments in the country.

A 10-month employee, Martinez manages the computer lab, school Web site, and distance-learning program at Lejeune High School, located on the Camp Lejeune Marine Corps Base, a military installation in southeastern North Carolina that is part of the federal Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) school system. Approximately 42,000 active duty Marines and sailors are stationed at Camp Lejeune. All 510 Lejeune students are military dependents and reside in base housing. As members of military families, the school population is highly transient.

"During summer, you have a lot of students transferring out, and new students coming in," says Martinez, who is president of the Lejeune Education Support Association. "There's a lot of paperwork for secretaries and clerical services personnel involved in getting everyone registered and situated."

With such busy schedules during the school year, summertime offers some ESPs the opportunity to update office records, pitch outdated files, and get organized enough to start the whole process over again. Without having to cater to students at the computer lab all day, every day, Martinez has time to order books and manuals for the fall and inspect computer room wiring and printers. "I get more done in one hour during summer than in eight in the school year," she says.

Summertime provides warehouseman John Stamp with the uninterrupted time he needs to do a detailed check of the aging building that houses the books, computers, printer cartridges, and other supplies needed by the 25 schools and offices of the Saint Joseph, Missouri, school district. This year, Stamp's big summer projects involved dismantling the building's boiler and inspecting old textbooks. While district mechanics checked the roof for damage and cleaned the gutters, Stamp beat the heat inside by counting, stamping, and coding textbooks so they can be tracked during the school year. Old, tattered books get sold.

While Stamp's days are full even in summer, he admits to missing the usual interaction with secretaries, paras, and teachers. "I like to know what is going on in the district," he says. "I miss their phone calls and e-mails."

—JOHN ROSALES

More ESP stories in this issue:

> **Solidarity brings better wages in Illinois** – *Page 12*
> **Kentucky ESPs win salary increase** – *Page 20*
> **Meet ESP of the Year Nancy Toombs** – *Page 49*

PHOTO: JEFF FASSETT

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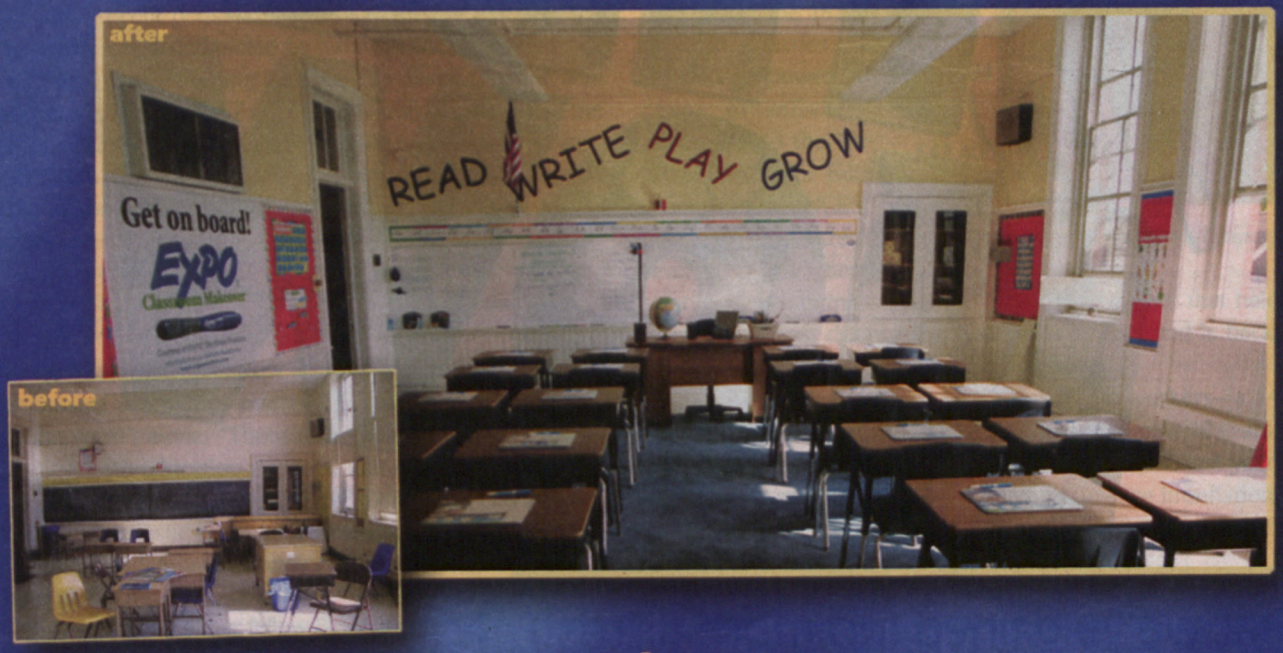

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EXPO®

What we've gained (no more dittos!) and lost (respect) in a generation.

BY CYNTHIA KOPKOWSKI

It was a tumultuous year outside and inside the classroom, says Pamela Lenk. Thousands continued the slow effort to rebuild their lives years after a powerful hurricane that had ravaged the Gulf Coast. An already protracted war stretched into another year, killing hundreds more soldiers and civilians. Third-graders at Lenk's poor, largely minority school struggled to master reading skills and keep pace with their peers at more affluent White schools.

The year was 1972. Then, Lenk was a first-year teacher in Gulfport, Mississippi. Now, she is a classroom veteran teaching special education students in Camarillo, California. Then, the hurricane was Camille, the war, Vietnam. And closing the achievement gap was—and still is—a pressing priority.

But as she prepared for the 2006–07 school year, Lenk reflected on victories large and small that educators have earned throughout her 34-year career. "NEA and CTA have helped teachers win the right to wear pants, teach while pregnant, and have smoke-free schools," she says. "We have new reading books, integrated schools, and special education programs." In other words, some of the history may seem cyclical, but we've come a long way.

To be sure, trends and fads have come and gone during the generation educators like Lenk have worked in the classroom. Richard Siegelman, a retired elementary school teacher in Plainview, New York, ticks off the buzzwords he encountered over 37 years of teaching—"New Math, Assertive Discipline, Whole Language...."

But real changes lurk beyond the catchphrases. Electives have fallen by the wayside as core subjects and testing have become the priority. This year's triumph may be getting all your students over NCLB testing hurdles so the school makes AYP—acronyms not even in the lexicon a decade ago. Getting students to turn off their MP3 players and stop taking pictures with camera phones certainly wasn't an issue in the 1970s and 1980s. (Although plenty of things still competed with academics for their attention then, like pet rocks and Garbage Pail Kids cards.)

While schools are now more diverse and served by a more professional, experienced workforce, teachers and education support professionals have lost ground on salary and other benefits over the past generation. Classrooms today are more crowded and represent a wide swath of languages and abilities. According to NEA research, this year will find you and your peers spending about 50 hours each week on all teaching duties, including noncompensated school activities, such as grading papers, bus duty, and extracurriculars. That includes 12 hours per week for the noncompensated stuff (up from eight in 1971). You'll get about 32 minutes to scarf down a lunch. (Down from 40 in the 1960s!)

If you're an elementary teacher, you'll have about 21 kids in your class, while secondary teachers will have roughly 28.

Classroom expenses will likely lighten your wallet by about $443 as you try to meet students' needs for everything from tissues to learning tools. If it's your first year teaching, you'll make, on average, about $31,704.

Just like last year, there will be obstacles in your path: the No Child Left Behind law and everything that comes with it, crowded classrooms, and too little funding come to mind. But in NEA's most recent polls, educators say they're entering the teaching profession undaunted by the drawbacks. Nearly three out of four entered teaching because of a desire to work with young people. And nearly 7 out of 10 veteran teachers cited the same motivation as their reason for remaining in the profession.

So that's you, today, as you take the first steps of the 2006–07 school year. But how does that stack up to past years? Read on!

Teachers

In 1971, Linda Krauss, now a staff development teacher in Silver Spring, Maryland, entered the classroom for the first time. She wasn't alone. "Thousands of fellow Boomers were graduating with education degrees, and there was a teacher surplus," she recalls. "I arrived in my sixth-grade classroom a naive but enthusiastic recruit, anxious to put into practice my lofty ideas of individualized instruction in an atmosphere of caring and sharing."

Krauss and many of her fellow Baby Boomers stuck around, resulting in an experienced, well-trained workforce in the years that followed. In the early 1970s, the median number of years of teaching experience was eight. By the 1980s, it was up to 12, and last year it was 15. More than half of all teachers working this year have at least a master's degree. In the early 1970s, only 27 percent of teachers did.

"NEA and CTA have helped teachers win the right to wear pants, teach while pregnant, and have smoke-free schools."

—PAMELA LENK

Today's teachers are primarily White, female, married, religious, and about 43 years old, according to NEA research. That's changing from past decades, when more male teachers were in the classroom. In the 1970s and 1980s, roughly 67 percent of teachers were women. In the 1990s, that crept up to 72 percent, then to 79 percent by the 2000s. The number of single teachers has dropped, from 20 percent in the 1970s to 15 percent in 2001.

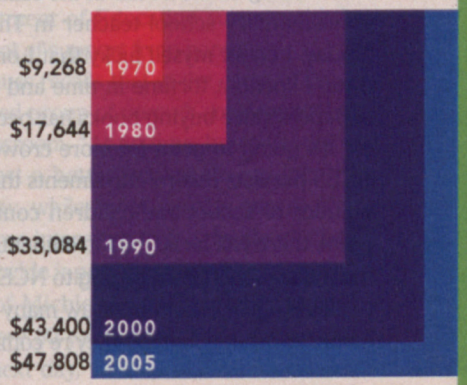
Pamela Lenk now and in the '70s.

PHOTO: JEFF FASSETT

Salary

During the 1970s, teachers' salaries lost purchasing power because of inflation, according to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). In the 1980s, the trend reversed and teachers' salaries began outpacing inflation, a turn of events that held through the next decade. But today, the 1970s trend is back, and it's less welcome than the return of disco.

Estimated average annual salaries of public school elementary and secondary teachers



SOURCE: NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS; NEA

Teachers now earn less than comparable workers—a 14 percent gap that's grown considerably over the past 10 years. Average teacher salaries rose 2.3 percent to $47,808 last year, but failed to stay ahead of a 3.1 percent increase in inflation. In Maine, West Virginia, and Alabama, the news was even worse, as average teacher salaries actually declined.

In a survey at the start of this decade, only 40 percent of teachers said they were satisfied with their salaries, down from 45 percent a decade earlier. No surprise here: NEA's fight for a minimum $40,000 salary for teachers and a living wage for education support professionals (ESPs) is as important as ever.

For ESPs in particular, salaries have remained stagnant and benefits like medical and dental have been steadily chipped away—all while their responsibilities have evolved. "Our jobs have changed drastically from simply assisting the teachers in the classroom," says Delaware paraprofessional Maureen Dreibelbis, who has worked in the classroom for 16 years. "We are now working with students at risk and teaching reading. We have to plan, organize, and execute a lesson every day. We have not seen an increase in salary for doing this."

Enrollment

Take a look around. Does the sea of young faces seem to be growing? Enrollment in elementary and secondary schools has risen 22 percent since 1985.

"In my first year of teaching in 1965, I had a class of 16—and a

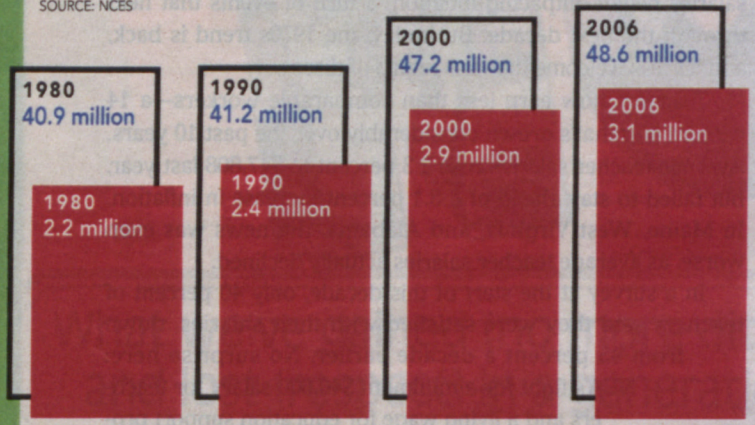
negative remark on my evaluation for not using all the books in the cabinet," recalls Sydney Stein, an elementary school teacher in Thousand Oaks, California. "Today, I count myself lucky that I only have 29 in my smallest class. I spend a fortune in time and money copying class sets of papers since buying books has become prohibitive."

It's going to get a lot more crowded in classes like Stein's. NCES predicts record enrollments through at least 2014, as the number of school-age children continues to rise. In just five years, there will be 50 million students in public elementary and secondary schools, according to NCES.

It's not just a matter of how many kids are coming, it's also a matter of what countries they're coming from and what special needs they bring as a result. Currently, U.S. schools enroll children who speak 425 first languages, according to the U.S. Department of Education. More than 5 million English-language learners enrolled in public schools in the early 2000s—a greater than 65 percent jump from the previous decade.

Number of students enrolled in preK–12 public schools

SOURCE: NCES



Number of public school elementary and secondary teachers

SOURCE: NCES

With roughly 3.1 million public school teachers, the average class size for secondary teachers has gone up from a low of 23 in the early 1980s to 28 at the start of this decade, according to NEA research. (Elementary teachers' average dropped from 25 to 21 in that time.) In growing metropolitan areas like Clark County, Nevada, the fastest-growing county in the United States, nearly 12,000 new students join the rolls each year (see "Playing the Odds," page 36). While you're handing out all those extra worksheets and scissors this fall, NEA will work to promote a class size of 15 students in regular programs and even smaller ratios in programs for students with exceptional needs.

What will all these kids learn? Subjects are changing, too. Driven by NCLB mandates and changing classroom demographics, classes such as art, music, physical education, and other electives are being cut. "In 1980, our high school teaching staff contained four art, two agriculture, eight business, four home economics, three industrial arts, thirteen English, and three special education teachers for a school of 1,600 students," says Allen Schuler, a Louisville, Kentucky, teacher who retired in 2004. "In 2004, the faculty included only two art, one agriculture, six business, one home economics, one industrial art, and nine English teachers for 400 fewer students. But there are now 15 special education teachers along with their five aides."

Technology

Perhaps there's no better educator to talk about the evolution of technology, at least where making classroom worksheets is concerned, than Claribel Jones, a Lake Charles, Louisiana, teacher who worked from 1963 until her 1999 retirement. That first year, she made copies with a gelatin tray, which required a complex system of writing, copying, sponging, and waiting for hours before moving on to the next worksheet. "I went from the gelatin tray to the hand-cranked ditto machine to the mimeograph machine to the copier and finally to computers with printers and scanners," she says.

Judith Custer, an ESL teacher in Eden Prairie, Minnesota, remembers how one mistake on a ditto master machine turned into a 10-minute ordeal of scraping ink with a razor and perfectly realigning the paper. Just the thought of it used to give her stomachaches on Sunday nights.

Even relative newcomers have seen significant changes. Take Deb Ramey of Guilford County, North Carolina. When she began teaching business 16 years ago, lessons focused on electronic typewriters and a few computer applications such as word processing and spreadsheets on a handful of Apple IIs in the school's lone computer lab.

Now teachers guide their students through operating systems, networking, Oracle programming, Web design, and e-commerce. Schools have multiple computer labs, where students learn everything from core curriculum to computer engineering, graphics and animation, and auto repair.

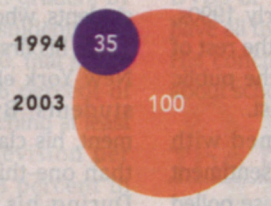
"The first year, many of the teachers were not ready....But after my coworkers saw I could do the job, that's all it took."

—FRANCES CUMMINGS

PHOTO: STEPHANIE BRUCE

In the early 2000s, the average public school contained 136 instructional computers, and nearly 93 percent of classrooms reported having Internet access, up from 51 percent just five years earlier. Virtually every school now has some level of Internet access.

Percentage of schools with access to Internet
SOURCE: NCES



The Public

For the last 30 years, the folks at Gallup have been asking what people think of the public schools in their community and nationwide. Public school parents have always given strong marks to their schools, consistently ranking public schools' performance higher than adults polled who don't have any children in the system.

Parental involvement in schools has also increased in recent years. Some 88 percent of parents attend school meetings, compared with 76 percent nearly a decade earlier. In 1994, 28 percent of teachers named the lack of parental involvement as one of the most serious problems at their school. But by 2000, more than half of the teachers responding to a U.S. Department of Education survey said they got a great deal of support from parents.

Linda Krauss recalls that in the early 1970s, she had a dedicated group of parents consistently helping in the classroom. "At no time, however, did any parent suggest a better way to do my job," she says. But today, while fewer parents stay at home, they've "become much more interested in the details of student performance and often provide input," Krauss adds.

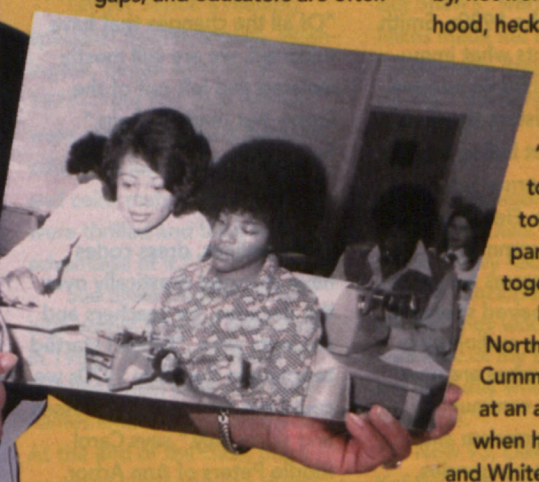
Carol Riddle Peters of Michigan says her parents are as involved today as they were 30 years ago. "We recently had a paper shortage and the next day, we had several reams show up," she says. They also donate supplies, host teacher appreciation luncheons, and even built a patio at the school.

As for the general public, their concerns about schools have changed with the times. In 1970, they worried about lack of discipline and financial support, as well as integration, segregation, and busing. Today, they're more concerned about school violence, drugs, and overcrowding.

Desegregation

A generation ago, desegregation topped America's school agenda.

In the 1970s, newspapers were full of stories about a crisis in public schools. But there was a difference. Now the focus is on achievement gaps, and educators are often blamed. A generation ago, racial segregation was the issue, and educators won respect for their courage.



Frances Cummings now and three decades ago.

In Omaha, Nebraska, Diane Green started teaching in 1969. "I was a child of the 60s," she says. "I believed wholeheartedly in teaching all children." Outside her newly integrated elementary school, "I remember pickups driving by, not from our neighborhood, heckling and threatening [Black] children." But inside, she recalls, "children ate together and played together, and their parents came together for PTA."

In Lumberton, North Carolina, Frances Cummings was teaching at an all-Black school when her Black principal and White superintendent asked her to integrate the faculty of a White school. "The first year, many of the teachers were not ready. Maybe 40 percent did accept me, the rest were very cool. But after my coworkers saw I could do the job, that's all it took."

In Georgia, the tide of integration found G.W. Tibbetts teaching in a White school in Rockmart. He was asked to switch places with a Black teacher at an all-Black school. But the Ku Klux Klan burned a cross near his house, and Tibbetts says, "I don't know whether I would have been gutsy enough to do it. I had a family to think about." Before he had to decide, the school board closed the small Black school and moved all its students to the White school.

The next year, Tibbetts, the local Association president, was hired by the newly integrated Georgia Association of Educators. Much of his job was supporting educators under attack for treating Black and White students as equals.

"Careers could be ruined," he says. "Sometimes you could walk across a plowed field and talk to a school board member sitting on his tractor, and he would do the right thing. But others wouldn't.

"It was a heady time. I thought in one generation, we would not have the race issue. That didn't happen."

Segregation may be legally dead, but it's making a comeback in classrooms across the country. Some minority leaders have given up on integration. Last spring, Nebraska's only Black state legislator, arguing for more community involvement, proposed splitting the Omaha schools into three districts, one dominated by Whites, one by Blacks, and one by Hispanics. His bill passed and is due to take effect in 2008.

But the Nebraska State Education Association is against the proposal. Diane Green, the "child of the 60s" who now leads the Omaha Education Association, says she's sticking by her belief that "separate is not equal."

—ALAIN JEHLEN

regation, and racial discrimination. Discipline, or lack thereof, led the list throughout the 1970s and early to mid-1980s. Then in the late 1980s and early 1990s, most cited student drug use as the top concern. For the rest of the 1990s and continuing through today, though, the public has placed lack of financial support at the top of the list.

And they are growing increasingly concerned with achievement testing. Gallup began gauging public sentiment on this topic in 1997. At that time, 20 percent of those polled said there was too much emphasis on it in public schools. By 2004, that number jumped to 32 percent. Among public school parents, the numbers jumped from 19 to 36 percent.

Concerns about school choice and vouchers are also on the rise, as people become more leery of these alternatives. In 1997, 49 percent of those polled nationwide said they supported such options. Last year, only 42 percent were in favor and more than half—54 percent—were opposed.

Students

Life has certainly changed for students. Their classmates are becoming more racially and ethnically diverse.

In 1992, the national breakdown of public schools was 67 percent White, 17 percent Black, 12 percent Hispanic, 4 percent Asian or Pacific Islander and 1 percent American Indian/Alaska Native. By the early 2000s, the number of White students fell to 60 percent, largely because of the increase of Hispanic students, who now make up 18 percent of enrollment.

In his first years of teaching, Richard Siegelman, the retired New York elementary school teacher, had few non-White students. By his retirement, his class was more than one-third Hispanic. During his tenure, the school implemented its first ESOL programs.

> "[Starting in 1971] women were allowed to wear pants to school, as long as the material and color matched the top. We were thrilled."
>
> —GINGER TAYLOR

When it comes to alcohol and drug use, recent decades have been a mixed bag. Alcohol use among 12- to 17-year-olds dropped steadily in recent decades, from 46 percent in 1982 to 35 percent in 2002. Marijuana use fell from 18 to 16 percent over the same period. But today's numbers aren't as good as the early 1990s, with record lows of 7 and 8 percent.

Dropout rates are also on the decline. In the 1970s and early part of the 1980s, the high school dropout rate was about 14 percent. By the late 1980s, it had fallen to less than 13 percent. It's hovered around 10 percent in the last few years.

Quick Takes

As the last few decades have rolled by, no part of your day has gone unchanged. You even had to fight for the right to wear pants!

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Charlene Knudten of Rock Falls, Illinois, has been a special education teacher since 1975. She sees the increase of students between the ages of 3 and 5 needing special services as a particular challenge.

"Not only is the paperwork mounting, but the techniques and support needed for my students with autism has changed my classroom approach," she says. "In the past, my students needed some speech and language support and went on to regular or special education. Now I am part of a team that requires extensive planning and development of strategies to teach these students skills in all areas of development. Besides meeting with parents and staff to develop individual education plans, I need to collaborate regularly with the social worker, occupational therapist, school nurse, and administrators to plan intensive programs for my students."

STUDENT HEALTH CARE

With each passing decade, the emphasis on keeping students healthy has dramatically changed the way education support professionals do their jobs. In just one decade, Rebecca Smith of Tulsa, Oklahoma, watched her role as a school nurse change. "We are becoming more and more a community resource and the primary health providers for our students," she says.

When she began at Webster High School in the 1990s, Smith would tell parents what immunizations their children needed. Now she administers them on site, and Internet billing lets the school district garner income from the service. Health care workers now recommend specialized programs for vision- and hearing-impaired students, and schools have audiologists on staff. Most nurses are now trained for such community-wide crises as terrorism and environmental emergencies. Smith and her staff keep records for every student and write individual health plans for children with special medical needs. They attend annual training, including mandatory HIV/AIDS training.

Still, the fight to be viewed as professionals integral to the success of the districts they work in remains, even in 2006. "Of all the changes that have occurred, we are still mostly isolated and left out of the loop—but ready to help," Smith says.

DRESS CODE

Like hemlines, dress codes have changed drastically over the decades, for teachers and students alike. "When I started teaching in the early 1970s we could not wear pants—dresses and skirts only," says Carol Riddle Peters of Ann Arbor, Michigan. "Well, the miniskirts were so mini, you can imagine

As for after-school time, students are at least purporting to be good multi-taskers. In a 1992 survey of fourth-graders by the U.S. Department of Education, 16 percent of students said they didn't spend any time on homework. By 2000, that figure was down to 10 percent. But 46 percent of today's students reported watching at least one to two hours of television per night, up from 38 percent in 1992.

"Kids in the 60s had radio and television, but they didn't have video games or DVDs or iPods or computers," says Siegelman. "They didn't have all the alternatives to reading and doing their homework." His conclusion? "Kids in the 2000s are perhaps less serious about school work" than their predecessors.

Ginger Taylor now and in 1971.

The Bad and the Good

In the late 1960s, educators' headaches came from classroom interruptions and having too little time to teach. In the early 1970s, top complaints included lack of materials, resources, and facilities, and in the latter part of the decade, "incompetent or uncooperative administrators" and student discipline.

Krauss, the idealistic young Maryland teacher who looked forward to bringing a healthy dose of the "Free to Be You and Me" utopian vibe to her classroom in 1971, remembers being surprised. "The students were hard to control and the rooms had no walls. Instructional resources were nonexistent. The open-space configuration was supposed to create an environment for team teaching, but nobody ever came to plan with me or to watch me teach. Obviously, things got better."

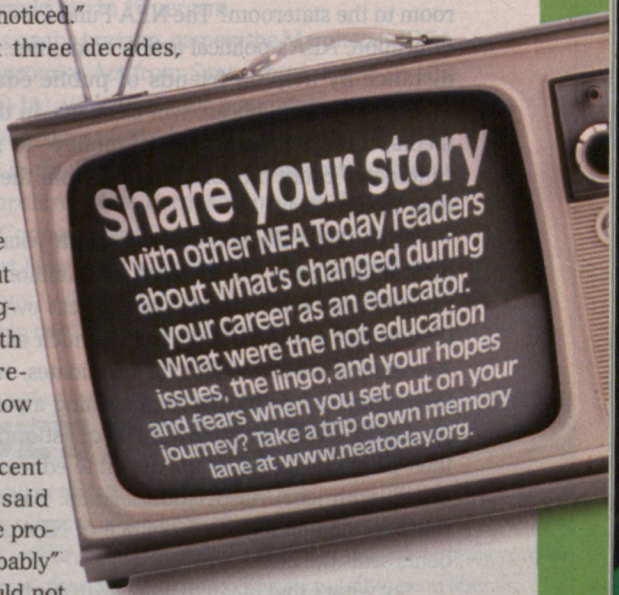
Jump forward to 2000, and some new concerns were muscling to the top of the list: student apathy, poverty, and disrespect for teachers.

"One word about what's different between now and then—respect," says Gary Winship, a high school teacher in Portland, Maine, who started teaching in 1970 at a rough school. "As tough as the kids were, they respected every teacher. I still teach in a tough school, but now the kids respect nothing—not themselves, teachers, school property, authority, or the value of a good education. As with everything, it's not all the students, but enough to be noticed."

For the past three decades, obstacles to education, heavy workloads, extra responsibilities, paperwork, and meetings have taken their toll. But educators' willingness to stick with teaching has rebounded from a low point in the 1980s.

Then, 36 percent of respondents said that if they left the profession, they "probably" or "certainly" would not return. Today, that's down to 21 percent.

"I'm still full of lofty ideas," says Krauss, "and am as proud as ever to call myself an educator. Just don't ever ask me to bask in the glory of 'the good old days.'" nea


Share your story
With other NEA Today readers about what's changed during your career as an educator. What were the hot education issues, the lingo, and your hopes and fears when you set out on your journey? Take a trip down memory lane at www.neatoday.org.

what recess was like in the wintery conditions in Michigan. Thank goodness for the maxi-coats." By the mid-70s, teachers in her district were allowed to wear pants—but "if, and only if, it was a matching pant suit."

Ginger Taylor, a reading specialist from Arlington, Washington, began working in 1971—"the first year women were allowed to wear pants to school, as long as the material and color matched the top. We were thrilled and took full advantage of it."

Sue Shaw began teaching high school physical education in 1965. "My girls dressed in matching gym suits with their names embroidered on them. At the end of the class, there was a required 'shower check' when girls wrapped in towels filed by to be marked off on the class list," she recalls. "I wore three-inch heels to school every morning and put on a wrap-around skirt over my shorts if I was going to leave the gym." Flash forward to this decade, and the matching suits and shower checks were gone. But Shaw's "warm-up suits and Nikes made me the most comfortably dressed teacher in school," she says.

BENEFITS

When a Michigan school district wanted Ila Oaks to teach in the 1950s, "they had all these plans in order, [including finding] a mother they would vouch for to take care of my two preschoolers each day while I taught her daughter."

Now 93, Oaks is a retiree in Kalispell, Montana. Imagine the district lining up childcare for you these days!

PHOTO: STEVE SHELTON

PACKING A PUNCH

How educators' contributions to the NEA Fund help kids win.

BY MARY ELLEN FLANNERY

SOMETIMES IT SEEMS LIKE ELECTED OFFICIALS HAVE never stepped into a school. Is it really that far from the classroom to the stateroom? The NEA Fund for Children and Public Education, NEA's political action committee, aims to close that distance by helping friends of public education, whether Democrat or Republican, win elections. In these days of mass media, it takes money—lots of money—to reach voters, and candidates count on contributions from the Fund to help get their message out.

In the 2004 election cycle, through your donations (never dues dollars), the Fund raised $4.3 million for federal races ranging from President to your district's own seat in Congress. (Sound like a lot? It's only half as much as the National Rifle Association raked in.) But for candidates, winning a share of the money can be harder than earning a passing grade in AP physics. Candidates first submit questionnaires, which tally their positions on issues important to educators, then sit down to talk with local Association leaders. Based on those grassroots recommendations, a council of NEA state affiliate presidents seals the deal.

So, what's that mean to you? With the future of the No Child Left Behind law (NCLB) and other issues at stake, it means you have a chance to let your voice be heard by supporting the people who support you in the federal government. Here are five good reasons why that's more important now than ever.

1 NCLB

Don't like NCLB? Don't like what it's done to your classroom? Well, your big chance to get it fixed, funded, or finished is coming soon. Reauthorization of NCLB, known to lawmakers as the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, is due in 2007.

More than 30 NCLB-reform bills already have NEA's support. Many take aim at the school grading system—in hers, Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME) would allow states to use individual student progress to rate schools; in his, Rep. Ted Strickland (D-OH) calls for multiple measures of achievement. At the same time, Rep. Dennis Moore (D-KS), who faces a difficult re-election bid this fall, offers a bill to suspend school sanctions when federal funding falls short.

Others throw a survival line to teachers: Rep. Jim Matheson (D-UT) proposes more flexibility in "highly qualified" provisions—a college minor, for example, could demonstrate competency. Meanwhile, Rep. Mike Castle, the Republican co-chair of an education subcommittee, has met with the Delaware

Education Association to talk about NCLB.

Besides an interest in reforming the most influential education law of this century, what else do these lawmakers have in common? All have received support in recent re-election bids from the NEA Fund.

2 MORE MONEY FOR EDUCATION

By almost any measure, the 2006 federal budget didn't add up for education. By just two votes, Congress adopted a budget that cut education dollars for the first time in 27 years—including more than $1 billion in NCLB funding, $12.7 billion from college student aid programs, and millions from special education, Title 1, Head Start, and technology grants.

We didn't win this one, but lawmakers supported by the NEA Fund gave it an honest try. Of the nearly 150 House members who received the Fund's support in 2005–06, nearly 85 percent said no to cuts (including Republicans like Reps. Jim Ramstad of Minnesota and Jim Gerlach of Pennsylvania.) And we've got a chance to get some of that money back. This past spring, Sens. Arlen Specter (R-PA) and Tom Harkin (D-IA) offered an amendment calling for a $7 billion hike to the President's proposed budget. (Both have been recognized by the Fund.)

3 VOUCHERS

President Bush's proposed 2007 budget also includes the nation's first school voucher program. If approved, it would earmark $100 million for private school tuition for students from schools that fail to make adequate yearly progress (AYP) for six or more years.

If it passes, and there are plenty of lawmakers who'd like to see it succeed, it won't be good news for public education. A 1998 Wisconsin study, done after 6,000 Milwaukee students received $29 million in vouchers, showed that the program had created a $22 million net loss to Milwaukee public schools. Other studies show no consistent academic gains for voucher students.

While the NEA Fund has supported anti-voucher candidates such as Michigan Rep. Joe Schwarz, a Republican with a tough election this year, consider this: In 2004, the pro-voucher PAC All Children Matter took in $9.5 million—nearly three times as much as the NEA Fund—including $640,000 from Jim and John Walton of the Wal-Mart family.

4 RETIREMENT

Dreaming of a beach house? It could well be the poor house instead, depending on what federal lawmakers do with Social Security and pensions this year.

If you've heard of the Government Pension Offset (GPO) or Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP), it likely means they've cost you money. Together, these two Social Security Act amendments reduce or eliminate retirement benefits for public employees—specifically employees who don't currently pay into Social Security, but anticipate Social Security benefits from another job that they or their spouse held. Nine out of 10 employees affected lose their entire spousal benefit, even if their spouse paid Social Security taxes for years.

The Social Security Fairness Act would repeal GPO/WEP. Sponsored by Rep. Buck McKeon (R-CA), the bill has wide support, especially among lawmakers, like McKeon, whom the NEA Fund is helping in re-election bids. Of those, more than 80 percent already have signed on as co-sponsors.

But it's not the only retirement bill out there. Watch out for the "pension reform" bill, which would make it nearly impossible for private employers to maintain defined-benefit pension plans.

5 SPECIAL EDUCATION

The 31-year-old promise from the federal government goes like this: We will pay 40 percent of the cost of special education. (Stop laughing. Keep reading.) It's never come close—and that shortfall, over the years, has cost state and local taxpayers more than $300 billion. Congress now funds 18 percent, but under the President's proposed 2007 budget, its share would sag to 17 percent.

But a solution is on the horizon, namely the Mandatory IDEA Full Funding Compromise Act from Sens. Chuck Hagel (R-NE) and Tom Harkin (D-IA), which calls for mandatory increases in funding to reach the promised 40 percent by 2011.

They're joined in the House by three Republicans, Charles Bass of New Hampshire, Mike Ferguson of New Jersey, and Rob Simmons of Connecticut. (Four of the five have received NEA Fund support.) But their success, like that of most pro-education lawmakers, will depend on whether more friends of public education join them on Capitol Hill in 2006. nea

GET POLITICAL

To find out how to donate or get involved, visit www.neafund.org.

The NEA Fund has supported hundreds of candidates, dozens of other PACs, and more than a few state and national party committees. Undoubtedly you've heard the pundits' claim that it gives exclusively to left-leaning liberals, but the PAC has supported candidates ranging from Dennis Hastert to Nancy Pelosi, and committees of both stripes—red and blue. You can see for yourself. Check out www.politicalmoneyline.com to search the PAC's public records.

For updates on the bills referenced in this article, see www.nea.org/lac.

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Lifetouch SCHOOL PORTRAITS

Confronting Controversy

Wire-tapping, war, and the aftermath of 9/11 are hot issues in the classroom.

BY CINDY LONG

Alongside posters of Gandhi and John Lennon, covers of *Time* magazine, and a life-size cutout of the Three Stooges dressed in caps and gowns, social studies teacher Michael Palermo's ground rules for classroom behavior are prominently tacked on the classroom wall. The first rule: Respect People and Opinions.

Palermo teaches at Yorktown High School in Arlington, Virginia—a suburb of Washington, D.C., and a short drive from the Pentagon, where five years ago one of the hijacked jets crashed during the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Yorktown students were deeply affected by 9/11—many of their parents work at the Pentagon—and even five years later, discussions about the attacks and the aftermath occur frequently in Palermo's social studies classes. Debating controversial topics is a favorite pastime in the Washington area, and Palermo's classroom is no exception. A particularly heated discussion flared in his Leadership and Diversity class last May, a week after the National Security Agency's massive phone records database was revealed.

"Our country was founded on the ideals of liberty and personal freedom!"

"If people have nothing to hide, then what are they afraid of? If an attack can be stopped by tracking just one person's phone calls, it's worth it!"

"Instead of recording calls, why not focus on transportation—what about security on our trains and subways?"

Unlike many Washington politicians and pundits squabbling over the same topic a short drive away, Palermo's students were learning a critical lesson of debate: that there is no right or wrong answer, only reasoned arguments and personal perspectives, all of which deserve consideration. "I think it's vital to address sensitive and controversial topics in the classroom, especially when it's an issue that hits so close to home," Palermo says.

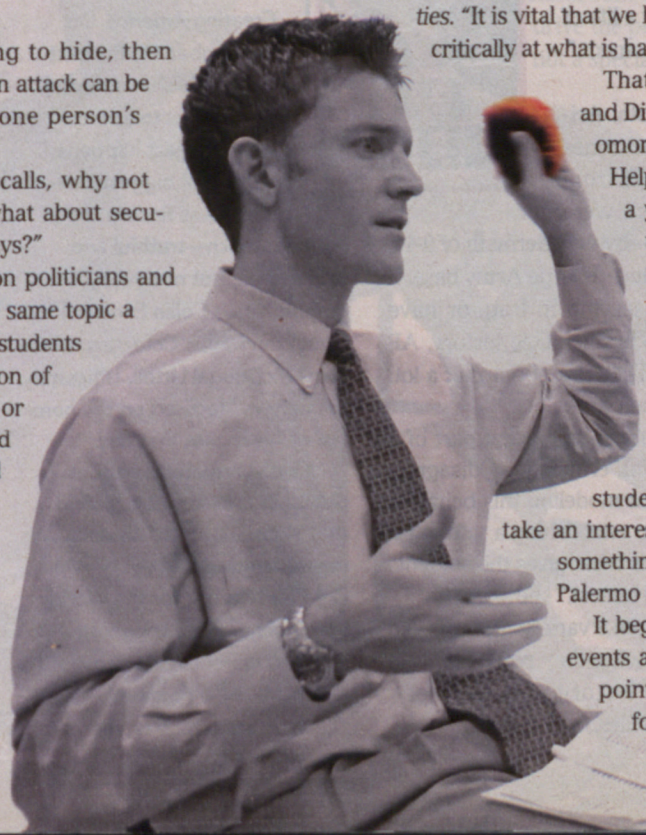


PHOTO: SANDY SCHAEFFER

When asked about the impact the French Revolution has had on history, Chou En-lai, the Chinese premier from 1949 to 1976, supposedly replied, "It's too soon to tell." Five years later, it is likely too soon to tell what the lasting impact of 9/11 will be (see "9/11, By the Book," page 34). But educators are leveraging the ongoing debate for a lesson in civics. Around the country, the discussion may take on different tones and tenor, but teachers everywhere are showing students how to discuss controversial issues rationally and respectfully—a responsibility of an informed citizenry.

ON "DISCUSSION FRIDAYS," Palermo leads the class in debates, aided by a Koosh—a stringy rubber ball named for the sound it makes on impact.

"The world we live in is complex and confusing—not just to children, but to all of us," says Mara Sapon-Shevin, professor of inclusive education at Syracuse University and author of *Because We Can Change the World: A Practical Guide for Building Cooperative, Inclusive Classroom Communities*. "It is vital that we help students develop the skills to look critically at what is happening in the world."

That's the aim of Palermo's Leadership and Diversity class, an elective open to sophomores, juniors, and seniors based on the Help Increase the Peace Program (HIPP), a youth program developed in 1991 by the American Friends Service Committee. The class focuses on topics such as diversity, racism, and conflict resolution. They also plan and lead peer workshops that promote acceptance and mutual respect.

"The ultimate goal of any good social studies teacher is to inspire students to think beyond themselves, to take an interest in the world around them, and do something to improve it, even in a small way," Palermo says.

It begins with taking an interest in current events and being receptive to differing viewpoints. Palermo establishes ground rules for discussion that encourage respect,

openness, and empathy. "With ice-breakers and team-building activities, the students usually bond pretty quickly and feel comfortable with each other," Palermo says. "This allows them to be honest and open when we're discussing controversial issues."

On "Discussion Fridays," Palermo leads the class in debates, aided by a Koosh—a stringy rubber ball named for the sound it makes on impact. Students toss the ball around the room; whoever holds it has the floor—no one else is permitted to speak. When finished, the speaker surrenders the floor by tossing the ball to another student, and the process begins anew. "I don't feel the need to jump in at every moment, and I don't have to worry about kids trying to get my attention," he says. "There is much greater student participation, and very often the discussion will move in an unexpected, and usually interesting, direction."

"HOW THE TEACHER ACTS is what gives the students reassurance that they can be open and honest."

With students representing a wide range of ethnicities, Palermo's class reflects the diversity of the Washington, D.C., area. On the subject of national security versus privacy and personal freedom, their opinions were just as wide-ranging.

"I value my personal liberty too much to sacrifice it. How long is the war on terror going to last? People have wanted to attack us for a long time because of the freedoms we stand for," said senior Molly Schmalzbach. "We need basic securities and a strong military, but these extra measures go too far—they're infringing upon what we stand for in the first place."

"Liberty without security is meaningless—there's no point," countered James Taylor, a junior. "Without security, you're living a life of liberty, but one that could end at any moment."

Buena High School in Sierra Vista, Arizona, is separated by two time zones and a 180-degree culture shift from Arlington, Virginia, but students there were just as deeply affected—and conflicted—by the aftermath of 9/11. The school sits adjacent to Fort Huachuca, a large Army base.

"Their fathers and mothers are serving in Iraq, or have served," says Barbara Williams, who teaches U.S. history, AP human geography, and philosophy. "They talk about that a lot. The war in Iraq is a central factor in their lives now."

Like Palermo, Williams believes that an important part of a student's education is learning to think critically, to disagree, and to debate respectfully. She believes modeling this behavior from the first day of class is essential to establishing a safe sense of community. "How the teacher acts is what gives the students reassurance that they can be open and honest," she says.

Williams brings in news articles from a variety of sources to help students evaluate and question what they read. She also explains the importance of linking history to the present. "When we studied the Treaty of Versailles, which ended WWI, it was obvious that the Middle East mandates set at that time are directly tied to some of our issues today," she says. "The American Revolution is [also] a good starting point. What is an extremist? A patriot? An activist? There really isn't anything in our history that cannot provoke discussion that touches on today and tomorrow. And tomorrow is in their hands."

On Williams' wall is a quote from Benjamin Franklin: "They that can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety." But for many students living in a post-9/11 world, the threat of terrorism is very real and present. There is disagreement in Williams' classes over whether or not the war in Iraq is the result of 9/11 and whether it's justified, and while some students are anxious about aspects of the USA PATRIOT Act, many find it acceptable.

"A common feeling is 'as long as I don't do anything wrong, I'll probably be OK.' Teenagers are cognizant of freedoms, especially personal freedoms, but seem quick to give them up," Williams says. "They say, 'that's cool, as long as it keeps us safe.'"

9/11, By the Book

In 2001, McDougal Littell was finishing up its latest social studies textbook, *Creating America*. On September 11, the textbook publisher stopped the presses to address what had just happened.

"[The] biggest challenge was finding the right approach—truthful and uncensored, but not overly graphic," says Collin Earnst of the Houghton Mifflin Company, which owns McDougal Littell. Ultimately, the editors "focused on the heroism of Americans that day."

Five years later, textbook publishers still struggle to find the "right approach" to document the attacks of 9/11—which, like Pearl Harbor for the World War II generation, triggered a series of major events, most of which are still unfolding.

In most textbooks, the war in Iraq, the USA PATRIOT Act, and offshore prison camps like Guantanamo Bay are treated as a chronology of dates and events with little explanation of their potential significance, according to Gilbert Sewall, director of the American Textbook Council. "Content on terrorism and 9/11 is covered very quickly with a few lines or paragraphs, and the word 'terrorism' itself is used very abstractly," he says.

Some publishers, however, endeavor to put events into context. In its coverage of 9/11, McGraw-Hill Education includes information on the 1993 World Trade Center bombing in New York City, the 1995 bombing of the federal building in Oklahoma City, and the 1998 bombings of U.S. embassies in Africa—as well as a broader look back at U.S.-Middle East relations. "It's important that we provide materials that show what was going on in the world leading up to the attacks," says April Hattori, vice president of communications for the K–12 textbook publisher. "Part of that involves making cause-and-effect connections between events."

Textbook critic James Loewen, a professor at the Uni-

That's also been Diane Wright's experience. She teaches U.S. history at Riverside High School in Durham, North Carolina, where most of her students lean toward the side of security. "They don't understand why it's a big deal," Wright says. "They don't think that their government would ever arrest them for a crime unrelated to terrorism, even if they did get the information from a phone tap." However, a smaller but sizable group of her students believes wire-tapping is an illegal abuse of power.

Wright used the war in Iraq in an exercise to encourage debate and the analysis of differing viewpoints. She labeled the four corners of the classroom and asked students to stand in the spot that best corresponded with their position on the war—Strongly Support, Somewhat Support, Strongly Oppose, and Somewhat Oppose. A roughly equal number of students stood in each of the Somewhat corners, a smaller group stood in the Strongly Oppose corner, and just one student stood in the Strongly Support corner.

The students wrote down four reasons why they chose their corner and the reasons they thought their classmates chose the others. She drew a grid on the board to capture their responses.

"There was a large disconnect," Wright says. "The young man in the Strongly Support corner wrote that those in the Strongly Oppose corner simply hated George Bush, which wasn't even one of their responses." The students in the Strongly Oppose corner hadn't anticipated one of the responses for Strongly Support—which was 9/11. "They felt that Saddam Hussein had nothing to do with 9/11, and they thought 'everybody knew that,'" Wright says.

In addition to why they chose their corners, the students listed evidence supporting their positions, separating fact from opinion. "The debate turned out quite well—it was structured and lively, and the students learned that [in a debate] they must try to anticipate the other side's arguments," Wright says. "I also feel it's important to talk about fact versus opinion—because they're so intertwined, students often don't know the difference."

Back in Arizona, Williams grapples with the same issue. In the weeks following the attacks of 9/11, a local Sikh store owner was shot and killed because he was thought to be Muslim. Using that event as an example, she warns her students about the dangers of making generalizations without adequate information. To illustrate, she points to another quote on her wall: "The most violent element in society is ignorance."

Williams' students sometimes ask her why they have to study history when "what's past is past." She explains that the solutions to the problems of today can often be found in the lessons of the past. Textbook critic James Loewen, a professor at the University of Vermont, agrees. But rather than relying on the information found in history books, he encourages teachers to have "meta-conversations" with students—that is, discussions about the discussions surrounding sensitive subjects. Otherwise, he says, "they'll decide that history isn't fun. They'll think it's boring, little more than memorization."

From Virginia to Arizona, teachers have used the events of the past half-decade to do just that, but Williams says it's for reasons beyond entertainment value. "Every citizen has a role," she says. "My hope is that they will be more than passive spectators as adults...actors rather than being acted upon." Not surprisingly, her classroom boasts another quote to drive the point home: "Democracy is not a spectator sport." nea

versity of Vermont and author of *Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your High School History Textbook Got Wrong*, acknowledges that some recent books are focusing a more analytical eye on events like 9/11, but most still have a long way to go. "It's not useful to just say it's bad that we were attacked," he says.

Textbooks have long avoided controversy, Loewen argues, by focusing on what has generally been agreed upon as the "right answer" to a historical issue instead of letting students consider all possibilities. Over time, though, the "right answer" can change. Japanese internment camps, for example, were explained in textbooks in the decades following WWII as essential to national security. Loewen argues that textbook authors knew otherwise as early as the 1950s, but that didn't become the "official truth" until the American government "fixed it" by apologizing and paying indemnities. The question of how such current issues as the USA PATRIOT Act will ultimately be described, Loewen says, will likely reflect a historical perspective determined by the outcome of the war in Iraq and relations with the Arab world.

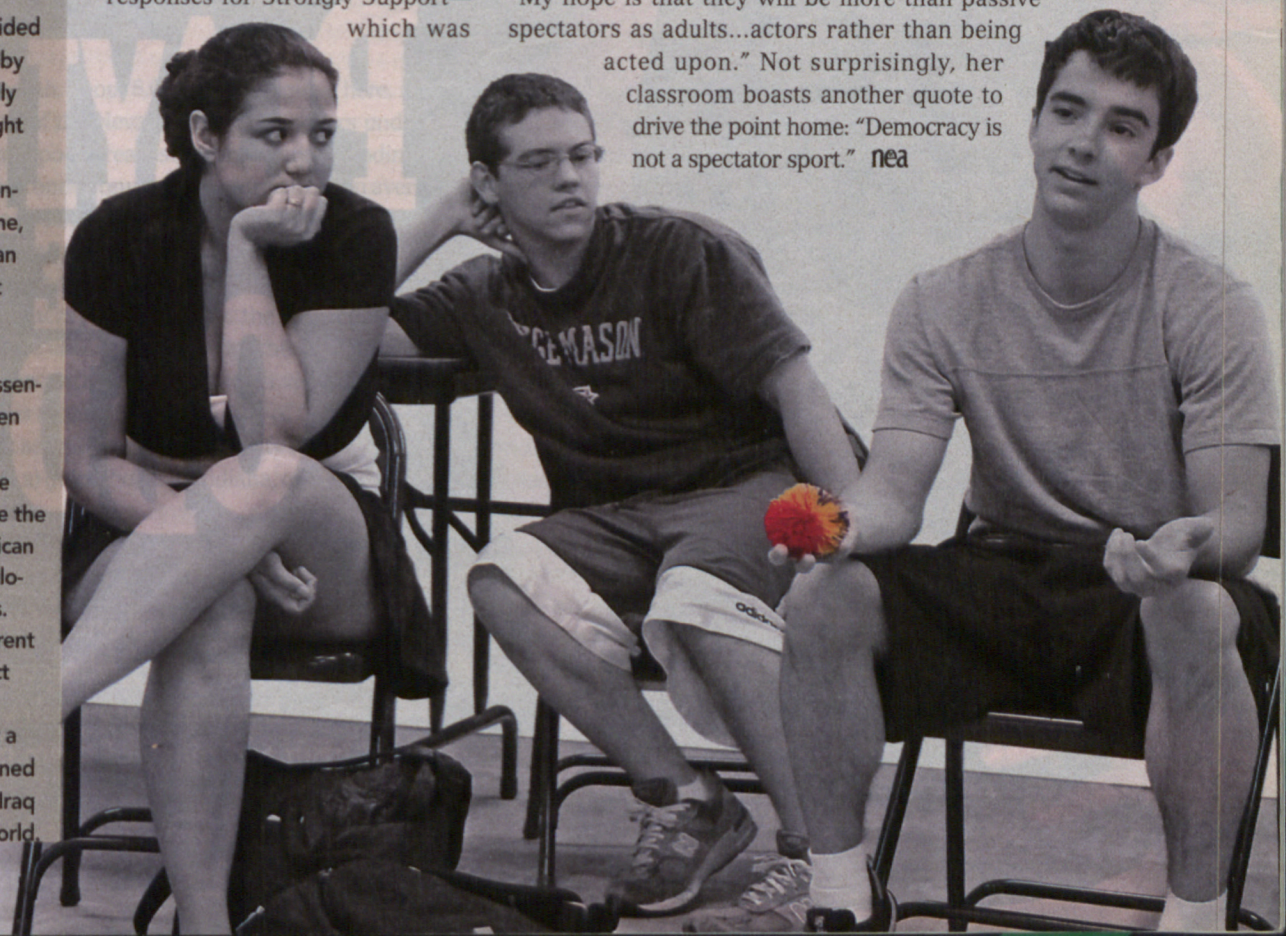
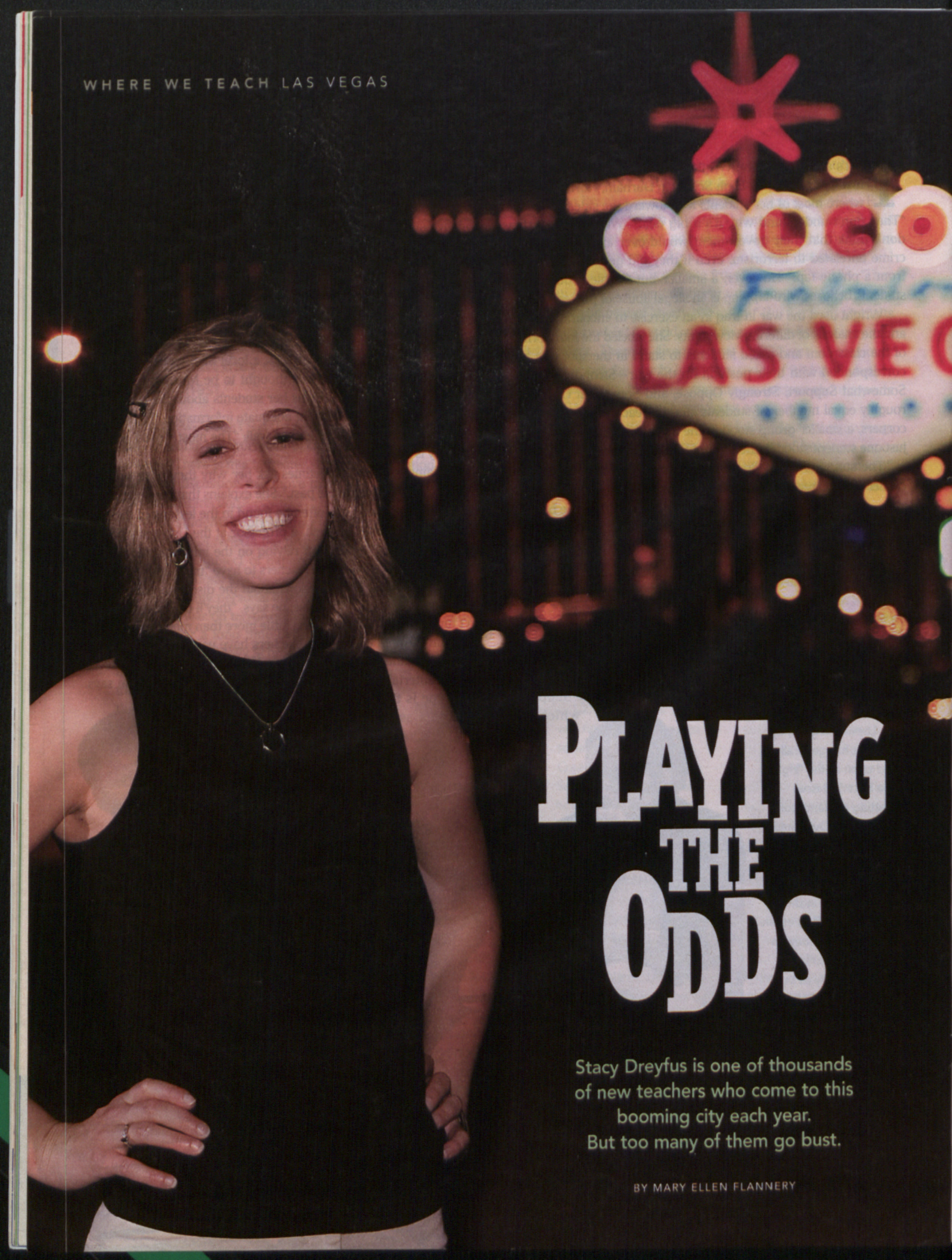


PHOTO: SANDY SCHAEFFER



PLAYING THE ODDS

Stacy Dreyfus is one of thousands of new teachers who come to this booming city each year. But too many of them go bust.

BY MARY ELLEN FLANNERY

When the doors to Ollie Detwiler Elementary swing open again this fall, little Dominic won't be there. He'll be telling his new teachers at the creative arts magnet that he prefers to be called Zorro. And neither will Maya, who whipped her long braids and dished to all the other kindergartners about her mother's cosmetic surgery. But John and Julissa will be back, as will Luis, Elijahjuan, Ashley, and Dulce, as sweet a girl as her name.

The bigger question is: Will Stacy Dreyfus?

After her first year on the kindergarten carpet, maybe she'd like to reclaim her name from the 5-year-olds' *Miss Dreyfus! Miss Dreyfus!* Maybe she'd rather have a job that doesn't require 13-hour days and sleepless nights. Maybe she'd prefer a profession that provides practical preparation, a professional work environment, and doesn't assign its hardest cases to its most inexperienced practitioners. Maybe she'd rather rake in the cash selling high-rise condos to Las Vegas showgirls.

Sounds easier, anyway.

Every year, thousands of new teachers like Dreyfus leave their Midwest homes or southern campuses and follow the neon signs. And they're not the only ones—Las Vegas is *the* 21st century boomtown. Each month, about 6,000 hopefuls move here. At the same time, as more of the Nevada desert disappears under artificial turf and private pools, real estate prices are exploding. Home prices, excluding condo conversions, soared from an average $161,893 in 2000 to $335,091 last year.

The region's dying for nurses, police officers (a local department hangs recruiting billboards in the airport), casino workers, and, of course, for teachers. Clark County, the nation's fifth-largest district, must hire about 3,000 new teachers each year. Part of the reason is growth: The district also will welcome 12,000 new students this month. But a big piece of the puzzle is turnover. These days, it seems every Clark County teacher has a colleague who is either: a) going home to Indiana, or b) getting a real estate license.

Despite doubling the number of recruiting trips to places as far-flung as the Philippines, the cry for new teachers has grown desperate. In June, district officials predicted they would start the year with more than 1,000 vacancies. The shortage may mean death to class-size cuts and new programs for at-risk students.

But the problem isn't unique to Clark County. Even in places that haven't seen housing booms since Reconstruction, a rapidly graying teaching force is approaching retirement and new teachers are leaving en masse. In Florida, one district has asked clergy to preach the virtues of teaching to congregants. Another in Virginia invited applicants to a dinner party, complete with disc jockey and gift bags.

Districts nationwide are going all out to recruit, and they're often successful, but they haven't quite mastered the other side of the coin—they still can't keep their new teachers. And that's the bigger problem, says Richard Ingersoll, a University of Pennsylvania associate professor known as the "dean of retention studies."

This is a gambling town, and the odds on Dreyfus' return, after a tumultuous but rewarding first year in the classroom, are so-so. If you're a betting person, you might look at previous results and shake your head. About 20 percent of new teachers quit after their first year, and some 50 percent, in urban schools especially, will quit teaching within their first five. In Clark County, a recent survey showed that about a third planned to leave as soon as possible.

"I do love it. The kids are great," Dreyfus says brightly. But, she pauses, "It's all the other things that make it difficult."

THE FIRST DAYS

At 7 a.m. on a cloudless May morning, as the sun glints off the Egyptian pyramid on the Las Vegas Strip nine miles away, Dreyfus gathers her kindergartners on the blacktop playground for the 135th day of school. It promises to go a lot better than the first, the 50th, or even the 100th.

"I DO LOVE IT. The kids are great," Dreyfus says brightly. But, she pauses, "It's all the other things that make it difficult."

John will not run away on the playground. If he gets antsy, Dreyfus knows what to do—simply gather the others, line them up, and walk into the building. He'll follow. Nobody will embarrass her in line, poking and yelling as they walk by more experienced teachers. (And Adam will not crack his head open—but if he did, she definitely could handle it. After all, it would be the third time this year.)

"Who is going to be my estimating king or queen today?" Dreyfus asks as her kids get settled criss-cross on the classroom carpet. "If your name has five letters, please stand up!"

"If your name begins with an I, please keep standing. If the second letter begins with the same letter as strawberry, please keep standing. Sss, sss, strawberry!"

"All right, Isela!"

Dreyfus has wanted to be a teacher forever. Back in Osh Kosh, Wisconsin, her hometown of 5,000, her mother has taught first grade for nearly 30 years. But small-town teaching jobs are scarce. After Dreyfus, now 27, graduated from the University of Wisconsin with a degree in early childhood education and then traveled some, she headed here. Where else could she and her boyfriend (a professional juggler) both advance their careers?

It is not what she expected.

"It's much harder than I thought it was going to be. You don't know if you're doing it right, and you don't want to fail the kids,"

PHOTOS LEFT: KEVIN CANNON; RIGHT: ISAAC BREKKEN

she says. "There were days when I was just like, I'm done. I have no control. They're running my life."

With little real preparation (and a soft heart), classroom management quickly became Dreyfus' weakness. She isn't alone—less than half of new teachers said they were "very" prepared to maintain order in the classroom, according to the most recent MetLife Survey of the American Teacher. It isn't much experienced in student teaching assignments or covered well in orientations. And while Dreyfus' professors may have taught her about Piaget, they never role-played what to do when a kid hides under his desk and cries, "I don't want a whupping!"

"I could write a lesson plan, sure, but I couldn't get them to the bathroom. I had two little boys pee their pants," Dreyfus recalls.

Often the only advice any new teacher gets is the old saw:

"Don't smile until Christmas." (Actually, Dreyfus and her friends did get another piece of wisdom from a retired colleague on making it through the first year: "Find your favorite cocktail and drink it every night.") And while administrators try to be helpful, their idea of help isn't always the same as a teacher's. Every week, new teachers must submit their lesson plans for detailed review. Nine times last year, Dreyfus endured observations and evaluations. (Every time her door opened, she shrank a little.)

But Dreyfus' classroom skills improved greatly over the course of the year, thanks largely to practical advice ("Stacy, he's playing you!") from her more experienced colleagues. This morning, when a lesson in geometric shapes devolves into a jostling match over crayons, Dreyfus moves quickly. "You're being rude and disrespectful!" she sternly tells her chattering kindergartners. "What does that mean?"

"I don't know!" snaps Elijahjuan.

"It means we're making you sad," Dulce whispers.

"I'll wait. I'll wait," Dreyfus says, as their attention slowly turns to her. "Boys and girls, as long as this takes us, we may not go to recess." (But, of course, they do. She's still a softie at heart—and in desperate need of a midday break, too.)

A LITTLE HELP FROM FRIENDS

Unlike many first-year teachers, Dreyfus has a formal mentor—the aptly named Grace Angel, who also is the school's grade-level chair for kindergarten. During those first few weeks last August, when Dreyfus just couldn't get home before dark and a day's worth of lesson plans took a whopping eight hours to write, Angel stayed and helped. They talk about behavior plans and theories of learning, but also the basics: how to hand in a lunch card, line up for a fire drill, or host a parent night. (Although many of her parents speak no English, they've still managed to let Dreyfus know that she's too thin with gifts of baked chicken.)

"Find your style," Angel counseled her.

Dreyfus also has support from all the other kindergarten teachers, who have become a close-knit team (they gather for monthly dinners, no less). Vicki Courtney still remembers her first year—27 years ago—when she inadvertently stole the veteran music teacher's classroom. Even back then, there was a shortage of classroom space in Clark County. It didn't make her feel welcome. And she knows that's important.

"Without them, honestly, I probably would have quit," Dreyfus says.

Based on their models, Dreyfus set up the best part of her day—the hour when her kindergartners rotate independently between centers. The housekeeping wing is pure play—Maya ties a baby to her chest with a long scarf, while Luis grabs a uniformed jacket. At another table, Frida carefully writes an illustrated story. (It begins dramatically: "First they dig a hole.") And, at another, the kids turn yellow Play-Doh into cones and cubes.

Still, this isn't what mentoring should be. Ideally, Angel would have received formal training. She would get compensated for her good deeds, and she also would have a lighter teaching schedule so that she could actually visit Dreyfus' classroom, model lessons, and meet more frequently. "There needs to be time for reflection," Angel says. "Teaching should be reflective."

Too often, mentor relationships represent nothing more than monthly coffee and reheated platitudes—"Hang in there, kid," says Segun Eubanks, director of NEA Teacher Quality. And most induction programs aren't much better. Just about 1 percent of new teachers get comprehensive induction, according to the Alliance for Excellent Education. The problem is money—doing it right costs about $4,000 per teacher. (But the alternative is worse. The revolving door of recruitment and replacement costs up to $2.6 billion annually, the Alliance says.)

Money is a problem for teachers, too. In Clark County, new teachers earn about $30,000 a year—less than the national average, which was $31,704 in 2004, and well below the $40,000 minimum NEA believes every teacher should make. With Vegas' stratospheric housing prices, Dreyfus has no hope of buying a house here. Ever. (The day she needs three bedrooms, she says,

PHOTOS: ISAAC BREKKEN

Stacy Dreyfus and her colleagues on the kindergarten team meet weekly to share lessons, chocolate, and practical advice.

is the day she moves back to Wisconsin.) To make ends meet, Dreyfus shares a garden apartment on the western fringe of the city with two others, including Krista Holter, a first-year teacher from Minnesota. They spend a lot of time talking school.

"Was John good today?" Holter asks at dinner.

Her share of the rent is $365. But don't forget car payments and insurance bills, plus the cost of new teacher supplies. Setting up her classroom with big puzzles and fat pencils, beanbag chairs, and books like *Click, Clack, Moo, Cows that Type* cost about $1,000. Taking a Praxis test that the district decided in February that new teachers must pass in April cost another $200.

"We could make more as cocktail waitresses," Dreyfus says grimly.

HOLD 'EM

To help prevent that sort of unintended career change, the Clark County Education Association (CCEA) has more than a few cards up its sleeve. Through one Association initiative, new teachers can move up on the salary scale by taking an urban studies course. Through another, a whole new column on the pay scale has been created for those who earn an "advanced studies certificate" at a local university—that's a bump of $3,000 for practical work in such topics as English-language learners.

But salary isn't everything. Often, working conditions are more important to teachers—and that's proven true in Clark County. Teachers ranked administrative support, in a recent survey, as the most influential factor in deciding whether they'll stay or go. Having time to do the job ranked second.

"You're not going to return if you don't have a good strong principal giving good support, and creating a good learning environment," says NEA's Eubanks. Empowerment to make decisions also was important in Clark County's survey—more so than salary, which ranked sixth. To answer that challenge, CCEA and school administrators have collaborated on opening four "empowerment" schools this year, where teachers and principals will be free from many district regulations.

To keep promising new teachers, district officials, NEA, and its affiliates will have to consider ideas like Clark County's, Eubanks says. And they'll have to rethink some long-held traditions, like the idea that the most senior teachers should go to the "best" schools, often leaving the newest recruits in the toughest ones. "It's the culture of teaching that dictates you're not ever going to get financial rewards, so you measure your success by getting 'good' schools or AP classes," he says. "We need to change the culture to make those challenging schools more meaningful, and find more effective career ladder programs."

Which brings us back to Dreyfus. At the end of her first year, where does she see herself on that ladder? Stepping off, perhaps?

Looking back, here's what happened last year in Miss Dreyfus' class. Julissa learned to speak English, and so did Luis. John learned to walk in a line, Bobby to put on his jacket. All the kids learned their ABCs, how to write a sentence, and how to listen carefully when Miss Dreyfus reads aloud.

And yes, Miss Dreyfus learned to be a teacher.

This year, when she comes back, she'll just be a little less soft and a little more "scary," she hopes. nea

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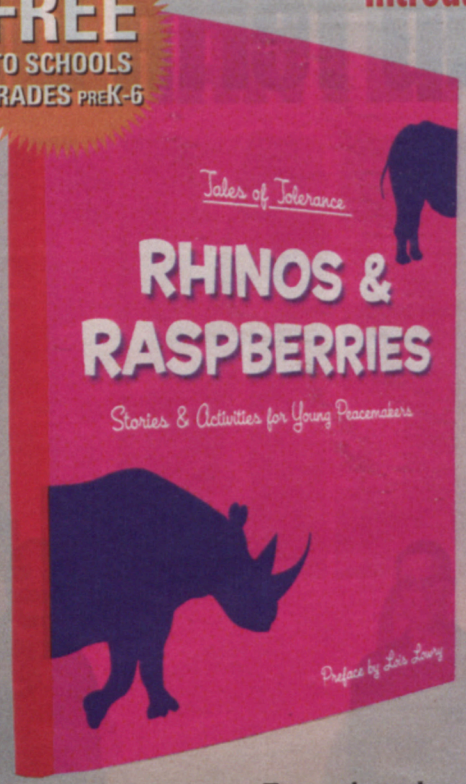

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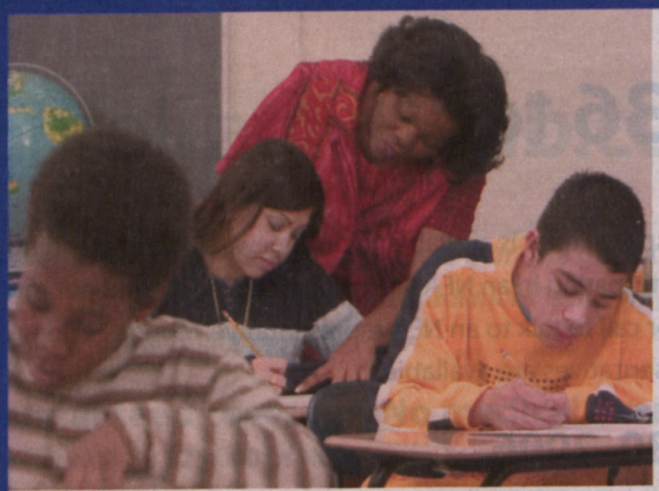

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During the 2005-2006 school year, the Foundation provided financial assistance and NEA provided technical assistance and expertise to nearly 300 teachers in seven states supporting their participation in coursework and workshops. The program also paid for materials and individual tutoring to help teachers prepare for state licensure examinations.

Today, the partnership is looking to increase the number of participating Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and expand the program to help more teachers obtain full licensure.

Stay tuned for updated information via the *NEA Today* and the NEA website www.nea.org.

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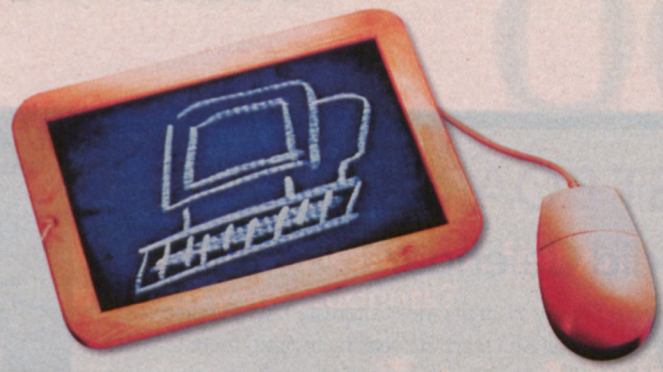
Should Technology Be Used in Every Classroom?



YES

When I begin teaching history and social studies in the fall of 2007, I'll require students to use as much technology as I have the resources for. They'll learn how important technology is for conducting research and how best to leverage it for that purpose. However, the students who aren't as interested in history will still learn skills that will help them when they enter the workforce. In almost every field of work, some type of technology is used. Students must be prepared.

If we complement and reinforce our lessons with technology—from Microsoft PowerPoint to streaming media, and computer spreadsheets to podcasts—we'll help students be more receptive of the material, and to become more familiar with the sorts of technology that have become a part of everyday life at home and in the workplace.

Finally, while students might not be as familiar with workplace technologies and software, they are whizzes when it comes to Internet and telecommunications technology. By using more technology in the classroom, we're speaking their language and teaching them in a way that they might learn. Ignacio "Nacho" Estrada once said, "If a child can't learn the way we teach, maybe we should teach the way they learn."

KEITH PARKER is a history education student at Austin Peay State University in Clarksville, Tennessee.

NO

Overuse of technology has inadvertently provided students with a deck of "get out of work free" cards. As a math teacher, I've seen the use of technology, such as graphing calculators, have some positive effects—students can check their work, create graphs, and work together to solve problems. But too often I see students using technology to perform basic operations that should have been mastered in elementary school.

Some of my colleagues in the English department attribute their students' writing skills, or lack thereof, to the heavy use of instant messaging and spell check. These technologies, though useful when used as directed, can lead to a decrease in proficiency. The need for core skills development must be the first priority of the student and teacher.

Our generation learned how to read, write, and do arithmetic by learning from our teachers' example—with pencils, paper, and our minds. True, educators have learned that our students' needs are unique from past generations, but we remember what is truly important in our children's education. They need to learn how to organize, apply, analyze—in essence, we're teaching them how to learn. Yes, technology is an integral part of this process, but that does not mean it is a required component of every classroom setting.

TIMOTHY KUBINAK teaches algebra and geography at King's Fork Middle School in Suffolk, Virginia.

OTHER VOICES

Here's what educators are saying on our message boards. Join the discussion by visiting www.neatoday.org/debate.

I HAVE no "21st Century Classroom" gadgets, nor have I ever felt the need to have them (I have been teaching for 11 years). I do believe technology has a place as a supplement to curriculum, but should never take the place of "good old-fashioned" teaching—presenting a lesson and discussing who, what, when, where, and how, and then placing special emphasis on why it is relevant to today's students.
RICHARD LEMIN Deer Creek Middle School, Edmond, Oklahoma

IF WE wait until middle or high school to teach essential technology skills to our students, it is too late.
LEANN MORRIS, Empire Elementary School, Carson City, Nevada

MY STUDENTS love the whiz-bang classes featuring Powerpoint slides, videos, music, etc. (I do too!) These gadgets and high-tech methods frequently help students understand the literature and provide visual reminders of the lessons. However, the gadgets are only effective *after* the kids have read the text. There's no substitute for reading. We should stop providing students with shortcuts so that they can squeak by without cracking the spine of a book.
KECIA HOPPER Troutman Middle School, Troutman, North Carolina

WHAT'S YOUR OPINION?

Is teaching manners and courtesy a good use of classroom time? Join our next debate and see your name in print! We'll choose from among the discussion board responses for the next issue of *NEA Today*. Visit www.neatoday.org/debate.

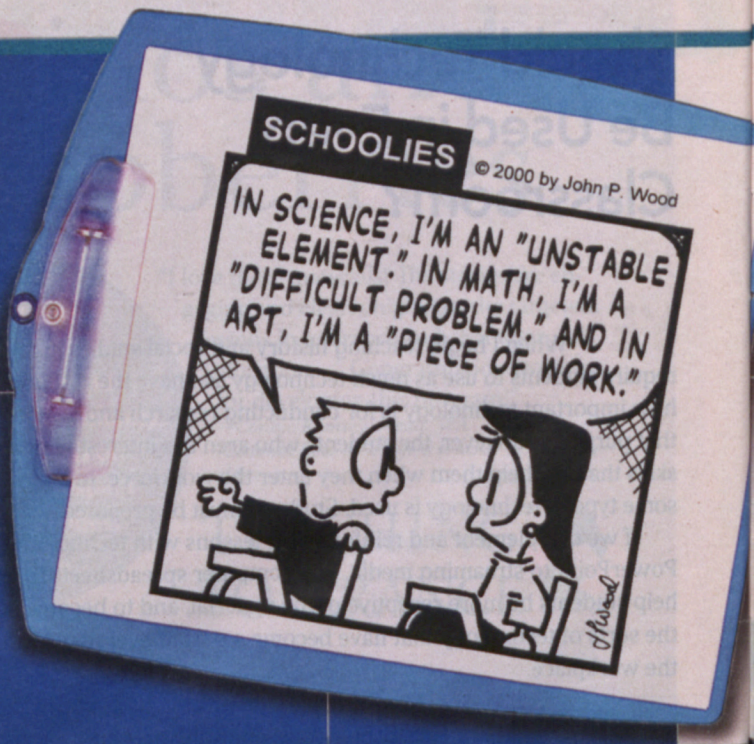
ILLUSTRATION TOP: CORBIS; RIGHT: STOCKBYTE

BEST BOARDS

Candid Calendar

What are my students most interested in? Themselves, of course! So I start the year by inviting them to write their birthdays on a large calendar, which gets a prominent spot in the middle of our bulletin board. Then, I use my digital camera to snap shots of students in the midst of lab investigations, making presentations, working on the computer, or just puzzling through a pencil and paper problem. I print copies of the photos on ordinary paper and staple them on the board around the calendar. The kids love having their pictures up and often spend time at the end of the period pointing out what they were doing in a particular shot.

JENNIFER PRILESON
High school chemistry teacher
Tucson, Arizona



BACK TO SCHOOL TIPS

NO DEBATE

When I taught speech, I asked students to write down three possible debate topics. My all-time favorite: "Mental detectors should be required in all schools."

PAM BREKAS
Retired teacher
Gardnerville, Nevada

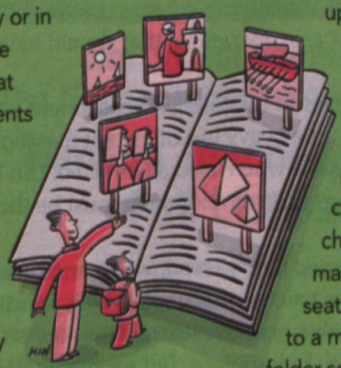
Biography Poems

I use biography poems to get acquainted with my students. I give them a handout with my own biography poem and then ask them to write their own. The poems help me learn more about students during our first day of class, and they're a great way to introduce my poetry unit. Once I collect the poems, I take notes on each student's interests, which allows me to organize group work based on commonalities. This helps them work effectively together.

KELLY DEININGER
Eighth-grade student teacher
Pottsville, Pennsylvania

Textbook Search

Start off the year with an exercise that helps students become more familiar with their textbooks. Have students use their books to find the answers to about 20 questions, either individually or in groups. I've learned that most students are not aware of how beneficial their books are and usually don't take the time to skim through them. Have them jot the answers in their notebooks for future reference, and they'll have fewer questions during the year.



DEBORAH MCCLAIN
High school Spanish teacher
Anderson, Missouri

Learning Names

I photocopy my seating charts onto transparencies and put colored paper behind them, using a different colored paper for each class. The charts are magnetized, and I leave them up on the blackboard all year for the students to see. I write the students' names on Post-it Notes and place them on the charts so I can easily change them. I also make a copy of the seating chart and staple it to a matching colored folder so the names of the students are facing me. I use this to take roll and call each student by name from the very first day. This system allows me to learn up to 150 names in a week!

DONNA BAILEY
Health education teacher
New Stanton, Pennsylvania

ILLUSTRATION LEFT: JASON REED; PHOTO TOP LEFT: COURTESY OF JENNIFER PRILESON; ILLUSTRATION ABOVE: JEAN HIN; PHOTO RIGHT: STOCKBYTE

FORM AND FUZZY

The first day of class, I always handed out a form that needed to be filled in by both students and parents and returned to me. After asking whom I should contact in case of emergency, I asked: "Relationship to you?" Most students wrote "mother," "father," "aunt," or "uncle," but a few times a year, I'd get the answer, "Good!"

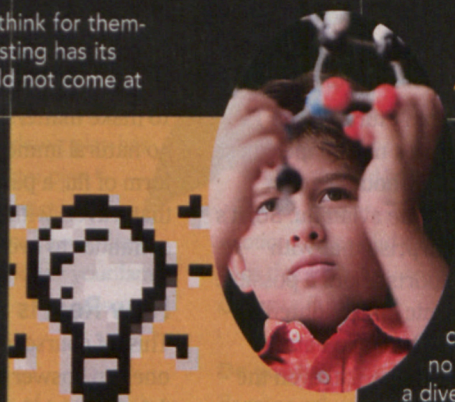
MADELINE HINCKEN
Retired computer teacher
Delray Beach, Florida

LIFE LESSONS

What's the most important lesson you feel you can teach your students?

ANSWER: The ability to think for themselves. Standardized testing has its place; however, it should not come at the expense of handicapping children's innate creativity and curiosity. I try to incorporate lessons and ideas that encourage my students to think about the current problems of the world. If my students are able to think critically, I consider my teaching a success.

PHILLIP HOLLAND
Student teacher
Dickson, Tennessee



ANSWER: They are worthy of respect and can do anything they set their minds to. I'm an art teacher, and it amazes me when a student discovers that he or she really can draw or really can create graphics on a computer (Photoshop, no less!). When you have a diverse classroom with students from varying backgrounds, you wonder how you will teach them all they need to know to survive in this world. The best lesson is not the one in a book, but the one we use to instill self-confidence and self-worth.

DOLORES RUSSO
High school arts teacher
Celebration, Florida

ANSWER: The most important lesson I can teach my students is to check their work. They should find the errors before I do.

FRANCHON LYON
Substitute teacher
Chatsworth, California

off the mark.com
by Mark Parisi
UM, VERY GOOD, DYLAN, BUT YOU DON'T NEED TO SAY "DOT" AT THE END OF EACH SENTENCE...
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TOP LEFT CARTOON: JOHN P. WOOD; ILLUSTRATION TOP: MEDIOIMAGES;
LIFE LESSONS BOY WITH DNA MODEL: JOSE LUIS PELAEZ INC; BOY WITH LIGHTBULB: CHAD BAKER; CARTOON: MARK PARISI

Pandemic or Panic?

It's impossible to say, but here's what you—and your school—can do in the face of avian flu fears.

BY SHEREE CRUTE

You can't turn on the TV or read a newspaper these days without hearing about the avian flu. So, it's no surprise that with ongoing media reports about a possible worldwide pandemic, and frightening spectacles like the TV movie *Fatal Contact: Bird Flu in America*, even the most level-headed folks have begun to fear the worst.

Nowhere has the concern been felt more strongly than among caregivers, be they parents, teachers, school nurses, or other education workers. Spurred by federal officials, many school districts have begun crafting contingency plans, identifying ways to continue operating in the face of widespread absences, and even providing distance learning programs should schools need to be closed outright.

The Big Picture

Influenza viruses have always been with us. The World Health Organization (WHO) reports that the first avian strain was discovered in Rome as early as 1878. But avian influenza A (H5N1), the current strain that has so many people worried, made its first appearance only recently, in 1996 in Guangdong, China. Initially, this new virus affected only geese; human cases wouldn't be confirmed until the Hong Kong outbreak a year later.

The virus didn't capture the world's attention until it crept across Asia in 2003 and surfaced a year later in Europe. Ordinarily, avian flu lives only in birds (and sometimes pigs or other animals), and flu viruses usually stick to a single species. H5N1 has caused great concern because it has crossed this barrier to infect humans. To make matters worse, humans have no natural immunity against this new form of flu, a particularly virulent strain that travels with migrating birds and continues to evolve.

How Real Is the Risk?

This, of course, is the question that no one can answer with confidence. As of July, 232 people in 10 countries have been diagnosed with H5N1, and 134 have died, according to the WHO. So far, threatened nations have swiftly identified, contained, or eliminated the virus, but "statistically, we're due for a new pandemic [global outbreak] influenza strain," says William Schaffner, M.D., chairman of Vanderbilt University's department of preventive medicine and an expert in biological weapons and infectious diseases.

Still, Schaffner cautions against jumping to conclusions. "The big concern is a strain that can go from person to person, through casual contact, but this virus cannot do that right now," he says. "It's good to be informed about the avian flu, but realize it's not even in our hemisphere."

In order for the virus to cause a worldwide pandemic, the WHO reports that one of two things must occur. There would have to be a sharing of genetic material between human and avian viruses, or the avian virus would have to mutate to a form that could be transmitted from person to person through casual contact. Early summer news reports of an infection that spread between members of an Indonesian family raised concerns that the virus had mutated, but "tests showed it was the bird form of the virus, not a mutated form, passed through extremely close contact," says Schaffner.

For now, the risk to humans comes from butchering, defeathering, slaughtering, or other handling of infected birds. In countries that have reported avian flu, aggressive poultry slaughtering, vaccination (there's a vaccine for poultry, not people), and quarantine programs have stopped or greatly slowed all outbreaks.

In the United States, carefully monitored poultry plants and farms offer excellent protection, experts say. But, in the event of an outbreak, there's a great deal individuals and communities can do to make a difference, and in the case of the nation's school districts, an important part of that work is already underway.

Your School District: What To Expect

Doug O'Neil, coordinator of safety and environmental health for Virginia's Fairfax County, one of the nation's largest school districts, is just one of the hundreds of school nurses, education workers, and health experts working with local or national task forces to ensure the nation's schools are ready for any disaster, not just the flu pandemic. Each district may have different plans, but many have preparations in place.

What's going on in your district?
O'Neil explains that "the idea is to maintain a continuity of school operation during the height of emergencies, especially in cases where 20 or 30 percent of staff might be missing." Your district's security office probably already has plans to keep supplies in the schools, step up cleaning operations to prevent infection, and perform disease surveillance, so it may be a good place to ask questions.

What about the national level?
The National Association of School Nurses (NASN) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are both involved in efforts to produce expert preparedness information for school districts. "School nurses have an all-hazards approach, but we're trained in detection and surveillance of illness patterns and communicating to health departments, teachers, and parents," says NASN's Sue McCarroll.

A national panel may have information ready as early as September, according to CDC epidemiologist Carol Stanwick, who is working with the federal agency's Division of Adolescent and School Health (DASH) on a pandemic preparedness plan for the nation's schools. A wide range of issues will be considered, including how to continue meals or medical care for children who must get those services at school, making sure everyone has a role in infection control—even providing distance learning in the event of school closings, she says. To learn more, go to www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/schoolchecklist.html.

You and Your Family: Taking Control

Rather than worry about a pandemic that may not occur, consider this an opportunity to take a new approach to personal, family, and community safety, experts say. Preparing for a pandemic is a "significant local and individual effort—the cavalry won't be coming," says Stanwick.

School nurse Janice Doyle echoes Stanwick's advice. "A pandemic plan has to be part of a larger disaster plan," says Doyle, who chairs her district's pandemic committee in Spanaway, Washington. Taking charge can lower your family's risk of injury or illness in any emergency.

Where do you begin?
To help manage your fears of a pandemic, learn all you can, advises Stanwick. To start, go to www.pandemicflu.gov. There, you'll find safety checklists and guidelines to follow for your home. You'll learn about national plans for public safety and can monitor national and international updates on avian flu. Also review www.who.int/topics/avian_influenza/en/.

Can you take practical steps?
Yes, because good, old-fashioned common sense may be your family's best defense. Ask yourself, "Could I lock my door for three weeks and be okay?" says Nancy Kass, a bioethics professor at Johns Hopkins University. Work out issues such as: Where do young children turn for help if parents are ill? What supplies—food, medicine, cash, water—would you need in the event of a quarantine? What could you do to help elderly or disabled family members or neighbors if you were needed?

Can prevention help?
Basic hygiene habits are also a good way to protect your health. Hand washing and shielding coughs are two of the best ways to avoid the spread of influenza and other viruses. "We are attracted to the exotic, such as bird flu," Schaffner says, "but the regular flu costs lives every year. Get your flu shots."

Do you have the heart of a hero?
Because education workers are often willing to help others, gather your inner circle of colleagues and identify what Kass calls "lay heroes," people willing or able to be first responders and stand in for others in critical jobs.

As you consider plans for your family and school community, remember that "if an outbreak occurs in the United States, we will have distant, early warning from the CDC and local health departments," says Schaffner. Taking steps to protect yourself now simply means that whether avian flu H5N1 goes down in history as a crisis or a scare, you and your loved ones will be better prepared to weather any storm. nea

Be Prepared *NEA Member Tip*

Janice Doyle, a nurse at Bethel School in Spanaway, Washington, knew her way around a crisis long before anyone heard the words "avian flu." Doyle is the author of *Disaster Preparedness Guidelines for School Nurses*, published by the National Association of School Nurses. She says that everyone can turn their classrooms or schools into healthier spaces by teaching and reinforcing the basics of cold and flu prevention.

SCHEDULE YOUR OWN HEALTHY CLASSROOM DAY, says Doyle, encouraging kids to make posters and other reminders of important—but easy to forget—behaviors such as hand washing and covering up when they sneeze or cough. Stock up on hand sanitizer and tissues for the classroom.

IN THE EVENT OF A FLU OUTBREAK, Doyle says, "Remember, children pick up stress from adults. Try to stay calm." Make note of any students that may be dependent on school resources such as meals for their health. Consider children with special physical needs as well. Share the information with your school nurse and administrators.

ILLUSTRATION: PHOTODISC

Teacher Of the Year

Maryland teacher motivates students and earns White House praise.

HER DAYCARE TEACHER and summers spent working at a children's camp inspired Kimberly Oliver to become an educator. She converted that early inspiration into a career so noteworthy that the 28-year-old earned the 2006 National Teacher of the Year title. President George W. Bush honored Oliver at a White House ceremony this past spring.

Oliver says she entered teaching to "motivate and inspire the neediest students, whom many have written off just because of the circumstances they were born into." Focusing on individualized education, instilling a love of reading, and tailoring lessons and projects for individual students helped the kindergarten teacher better her school and community.

In her six years at Maryland's Broad Acres Elementary School, Oliver helped build consistency in curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The once-struggling school met or exceeded No Child Left Behind requirements for the last three years.

To promote literacy, Oliver helps sponsor "Books and Supper Night," a family event held in the library four times a year. Working with colleagues, she wrote and received grants for electronic learning systems, tape players, and books in English and Spanish. She even taught one student's parents English.

Teacher of the Year **Kimberly Oliver** (second from left) at a White House ceremony with Education Secretary Margaret Spellings, First Lady Laura Bush, and President Bush.

PEOPLE POLL

Where did you most enjoy spending time this summer?

In the sand at the beach—25%
Seeing the sights on a great U.S. vacation—21%
Second job/professional conference/volunteering—19%
Backyard in the hammock with a good book—18%
"Mais oui!" Adventure abroad—9%
Breathing in the crisp air on a mountain getaway—8%

Head to www.neatoday.org to vote in October's Poll:

You find $1,000 in an old coat pocket—how do you spend it?

Any Given Saturday

A Tacoma, Washington, high school teacher keeps his eye on the ball as an NFL draft expert.

AS YOU READ THIS, Rob Rang is either prepping for or recovering from a Saturday spent watching just about every college football game, plus tapes of the ones he missed the previous weekend. He's a nationally known talent scout, of sorts, whose picks and pans on NFLdraftscout.com and in *USA Today* are parsed by pro team officials, agents, and football fans alike.

What those folks may not know is that Rang, 30, is a full-time English teacher at Mount Tahoma High School (of which he is a proud graduate). But his students are very aware of his side gig. "Kids who may not be reachable in traditional ways, I can reach with the football," Rang says.

What began as a hobby six years ago grew into a high-profile professional side job. "I used to read *USA Today*, and now I look in there and see my own picture," Rang says. "I've had offers to be an NFL scout, but I just want to be a teacher—to make that my top priority."

—CYNTHIA KOPKOWSKI

PHOTO TOP: RON SACHS/CONSOLIDATED PHOTO; BOTTOM: SCOTT EKLUND

ESP of the Year

In one Kentucky school, a custodial supervisor goes above and beyond (and up the walls).

"WE SUCCEED, No Exceptions and No Excuses." No one embodies the motto of South Heights Elementary School in Henderson, Kentucky, more than Nancy Toombs. Named NEA's 2006 Education Support Professional of the Year, Toombs is a tireless worker in the school and community.

Whether it's scarecrows or snowmen, staff and students know the painted murals that brighten South Heights come courtesy of Toombs. Her imagination is evident also at the Hard Work Café, a biweekly reward for successful students. She coordinates a tempting Café menu and activities, while transforming the gym into a jungle, the circus, or the sea floor.

Active and respected, Toombs is a commanding force at school board meetings, enhancing the ESP image with an educated voice on issues such as health care and school funding. She is also a volunteer firefighter and member of Habitat for Humanity, for which she organized a fundraiser for Hurricane Katrina evacuees. Yet Toombs remains humble about her new title. "It shocked me at first because there's so many good [ESPs] out there," she says. —CAITLIN HICKEY

Mrs. Henderson Presents...Better Health

A California elementary school teacher coordinates a free clinic for the disenfranchised.

Anne Henderson (pink shirt) works with students and staff at the clinic.

ANNE HENDERSON teaches language arts and math at Pueblo Elementary in Pomona, California, but she is something of a health care advocate, too. For more than a decade, she's helped coordinate a local free health clinic, setting up school locations, assisting medical staff, coordinating meals, and publicizing its work.

Created 12 years ago to offer immigrants and the poor better access to health care, the clinic is staffed by volunteers and physicians from an area hospital, who supervise medical students from a nearby university.

It's an agile facility that rotates among eight different elementary schools, offering physicals, prenatal care, baby checkups, medical counseling, and preventive care to those who might not otherwise get it. "Everyone benefits," says Henderson. "Medical students get the hands-on experience, citizens get access to medical care, and I feel gratified by giving back to the community."

Says Kristen Setliff, a clinic doctor, "If it weren't for her...our job wouldn't be so easy." —DEBORAH FORD

GOT A TIP?

Do you have an interesting story tip? Contact Cynthia Kopkowski at **ckopkowski@nea.org**.

PHOTO TOP: MIKE LAWRENCE; BOTTOM: BOB RIHA JR.

Democracy in Action

New NEA Resolutions and Resolutions Amended at the 2006 Representative Assembly

This listing does not include Resolutions adopted with editorial amendments. All NEA resolutions are available online at www.nea.org.

A-2. Educational Opportunity for All

The National Education Association believes that each student has the right to a free public education that should be suited to the needs of the individual and guaranteed by state constitutions and the United States Constitution. Education is a lifelong process, and public education serves a constituency that embraces all age groups. Access to and opportunities for postsecondary education should be widely available, and no qualified student should be denied such opportunities because of financial considerations.

The Association also believes that all schools must be accredited under uniform standards established by the appropriate agencies in collaboration with the Association and its affiliates and that the accreditation process must provide sufficient flexibility to enable individual schools to achieve educational excellence and respond to the needs of their students and community. The development of a periodic review of locally established programs should involve community members, parents/guardians, students, teachers, and education support professionals. The Association further believes that individuals, at their expense, should be free to choose, to supplement, or to substitute education in privately supported, nonsegregated, nonpublic schools.

The Association believes tax-exempt status should be denied to those institutions whose policies and/or practices prevent the integration of the institutions. (1969, 2006)

A-5. American Education Week

The National Education Association believes that American Education Week is an important observance during which positive attention should be focused on the contributions of public education and education employees. (1997, 2006)

A-10. School Boards

The National Education Association believes that it is the responsibility of school boards to provide a quality education to each student within a school district. The Association also believes that school boards must provide resources and support so that each school in a district meets standards for educational excellence. The Association further believes that school boards must promote public understanding of the importance of public education and the schools and programs within their school districts.

The Association believes that the composition of school boards must be representative of the population within the school district, including minority groups; that board members must be elected by the voters in the school district; and that board members must be elected from representative districts. The Association opposes federal, state, and local takeovers of public schools, public school districts, and their governing boards. The Association also believes that the closing of schools by school boards to avoid legislative corrective action is not in the best interest of students, parents, or school employees. The Association further believes that provisions should be made for parents/guardians of students who are attending school in a district other than their home district as part of a court-ordered interdistrict busing plan to have substantive influence on board actions and policies.

The Association believes that student participation in a school board's deliberative process should be encouraged; however, student input in the voting process should be advisory only. Wherever a school board includes student members, the Association also believes that the student members should be excluded from participating in discussions, receiving information, and voting on issues dealing with education employees and items contained in negotiated agreements.

The Association further believes that school board meetings must be held at times and places that allow education employees, local affiliates, and the community to participate in educational decision making. (1980, 2006)

A-14. Financial Support of Public Education

The National Education Association believes that every state should ensure its students a quality education by providing the funding needed to enable all students to achieve educational excellence. Such an education requires adequate and equitable funding from public tax sources for schools to obtain the resources (e.g., personnel, programs, materials, buildings, and technology) to meet the needs of all students. The Association also believes that—

a. An increasing portion of public funds should be for direct instruction of students.
b. The amount of aid must be generally predictable for long-range planning and specifically predictable for year-to-year planning.
c. Present programs of specific aid must be expanded and improved by consolidation and simplification of administration.
d. Tax revision favorable to public education should be encouraged and continually reviewed at every governmental level.
e. Local governing boards must be fiscally independent, and restrictive limits must not be imposed on their budgets or long-term borrowing.
f. The state and local share of finance must be derived from a tax system that is balanced and complementary in nature, includes all broad-based taxes, reduces the excessive reliance on property taxes, and protects subsistence income.
g. Provisions must be made for research, development, implementation, continuation, and improvement in education practices. Funding must be included for resources such as personnel, time for staff planning, training and professional development, facilities, equipment, and materials.
h. State and federal mandates affecting public education programs must be accompanied by adequate and equitable funding.
i. School trust lands must be administered with the generation of funds for public education as a primary goal and in a manner that ensures the sustainable use of those lands by current and future generations. State school trust funds should be fairly compensated by the federal government for school trust lands included in national parks, monuments, or wilderness areas.
j. Efforts should be made at the state and federal levels to ensure stable, adequate, and equitable funding of public schools historically receiving revenues derived from state and federal lands and natural resources. These efforts should include, but not be limited to, ensuring the sustainable use of these public lands and resources by current and future generations.
k. Additional funding must be provided to cover the cost of achieving the goals of raising student performance, implementing new programs, and raising standards of student learning.
l. Funding should be greater for students facing social, economic, and/or education challenges.
m. Funds must be provided for programs to alleviate race, gender, and sexual orientation discrimination and to eliminate portrayal of race, gender, sexual orientation, and gender identification stereotypes in the public schools.
n. Public funds must not be expended for any materials used to promote race, gender, or sexual orientation and gender identification stereotypes and/or biases.
o. Public funds must not be expended in institutions where either specific programs or the institution has been found guilty of discrimination.
p. Categorical funding must be assured in areas such as special education, bilingual/English as a second language, class size reduction, and the economically/educationally disadvantaged.
q. Any institution, agency, or individual receiving financial aid from federal, state, or local governments must adhere to all applicable state and federal laws, rules, and regulations.
r. Full-day, every day kindergarten programs should be fully funded.
s. Federal, state, and, as appropriate, local governments should provide funds sufficient to make pre-kindergarten available for all three- and four-year-old children.
t. It is inappropriate to support the educational programs of a public school by the sale of non-nutritious foods and beverages to students during the school day.
u. Public funds should be based on student enrollment rather than student attendance.

The Association opposes providing any public revenues to pre-K through 12 schools for sectarian instruction. The Association also opposes providing such revenues to sectarian and nonsectarian pre-K through 12 private schools or to nonpublic school students in pre-K through 12 education, unless such revenues are used for educational services that are not available in public schools to which students have reasonable access. (1997, 2006)

A-15. Federal Financial Support for Education

The National Education Association believes that the federal government has a legitimate and proper concern and responsibility for the quality of public education provided to its citizens.

The federal government should—

a. Ensure equity and adequacy of educational opportunity for all
b. Collect basic data to be used in public schools and to engage in research,

development, and consultation activities that support quality state and local education programs

c. Grant supplemental aid to states that are not able to raise adequate funds to provide all students with a high-quality education and to provide funding to support state and local government efforts in pursuit of national interests in public education.

Therefore, federal funding formulas should reflect the most current, accurate accounting of the public school population; measurements of poverty; and the state's ability to raise adequate funds. The Association also believes that funding for federal programs should be substantially increased, not merely redistributed among states or other federal initiatives.

The Association further believes that there should be federal support for education whereby:

a. The federal government assumes a full partnership role with local school districts by providing significant levels of federal funding for elementary and secondary education through a program of general aid and categorical assistance along with the mandatory full funding of mandated federal programs.
b. Federal education funding is clear and identifiable within the federal budget.
c. Federally funded instructional programs have maximum teacher involvement in their development at the federal level and must be implemented at the local level only after the involvement and approval of the recognized bargaining agent or local affiliate.
d. Advisory committees for federally funded programs reflect the ethnic makeup of local communities and maintain a gender balance to ensure accountability and equity. Parents/guardians, students, and educators should be included as members of these committees.
e. The amount of aid is generally predictable for long-range planning and specifically predictable for year-to-year planning.
f. Federal legislation complies with civil rights statutes and is consistent with the constitutional provision respecting the establishment of religion and provides for judicial review as to its constitutionality.
g. Categorical funding is assured in areas such as special education, bilingual/English as a second language, and the economically/educationally disadvantaged.

The Association believes that federal monies budgeted for pre-K through 12 education must be equitably and adequately expended for public education at the pre-K through 12 level. The Association opposes any federal legislation, laws, or regulations that provide funds, goods, or services to sectarian schools. The Association also opposes providing such funds, goods, or services to nonsectarian private schools or nonpublic school students in pre-K through 12 education, unless those funds, goods, or services are used for educational services that are not available in public schools to which students have reasonable access. The Association condemns and deplores federal policies and programs that serve to undermine America's historical commitment to free public education. (1983, 2006)

A-28. Local Education Foundations

The National Education Association believes that local education foundations (LEFs) can strengthen the educational objectives of a school system by supporting programs that will enhance the approved school curriculum. LEFs are nonprofit organizations whose boards represent local community and education leaders. Each LEF is unique in its operation with the purpose of generating resources for local public education programs.

The Association also believes that LEFs should be separate from the local board of education and district administration, and must not supplant local budgets. The Association further believes that education employees in positions within an LEF-funded program must be a part of an existing collective bargaining unit, or in nonbargaining jurisdictions, must be subject to the existing legislation, employer policy, and/or other sources that establish the terms and conditions of employment.

The Association believes that LEFs should grant awards to education employees in a fair, equitable, and nondiscriminatory process. LEFs should establish, publish, and implement clear guidelines for granting awards.

The Association believes that education employees included in LEF grant programs must be protected from reproach by school and/or community members. (2006)

A-32. Takeover of Public Schools or Public School Districts

The National Education Association believes that the locally elected school board should govern the school district to provide an educational program designed to meet the needs of all students in the district. School boards of public school districts undergoing a program improvement process should maintain their authority over school district business as duly elected officials of the school district.

The Association also believes that if a takeover of a public school or a public school district occurs, current collective bargaining agreements and due process rights must be maintained. Employees of these public schools and public school districts should remain bargaining unit members of local, state, and national affiliates.

The Association further believes that federal, state, and local support should be given to public schools and public school districts undergoing a program improvement process. Support should also be provided by local and state affiliates, as well as the Association.

The Association believes that if charter schools are created to replace public schools that have been taken over, they must follow all current laws regarding charter schools and comply with the Association's criteria for acceptable charter schools. (2006)

A-34. School Restructuring

The National Education Association believes that school restructuring efforts must employ a democratic process that meaningfully involves local associations and other stakeholders in all decision making. Such efforts must—

a. Adhere to collectively bargained labor agreements
b. Comply with all appropriate school board policies
c. Provide the funding necessary to implement and sustain the restructuring
d. Weigh the consequences of restructuring on all students, education employees, the entire school system, and the community. (2006)

B-6. Adult Education

The National Education Association supports adult education programs that provide lifelong educational and career opportunities. The Association also recognizes the importance of high school completion, English language acquisition, parenting education, career training, and other adult education programs that provide students with an opportunity to become productive, effective, and responsible parents, citizens, and community members. (2006)

B-11. Racism, Sexism, Sexual Orientation, and Gender Identification Discrimination

The National Education Association believes in the equality of all individuals. Discrimination and stereotyping based on such factors as race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identification, disability, ethnicity, immigration status, occupation, and religion must be eliminated.

The Association also believes that these factors should not affect the legal rights and obligations of the partners in a legally recognized domestic partnership, civil union, or marriage in regard to matters involving the other partner, such as medical decisions, taxes, inheritance, adoption, and immigration.

The Association further believes that plans, activities, and programs for education employees, students, parents/guardians, and the community should be developed to identify and eliminate discrimination and stereotyping in all educational settings. Such plans, activities, and programs must—

a. Increase respect, understanding, acceptance, and sensitivity toward individuals and groups in a diverse society composed of such groups as American Indians/Alaska Natives, Asians and Pacific Islanders, Blacks, Hispanics, women, gays, lesbians, bisexuals, transgendered persons, and people with disabilities
b. Eliminate discrimination and stereotyping in curricula, textbooks, resource and instructional materials, activities, etc.
c. Foster the dissemination and use of nondiscriminatory and nonstereotypical language, resources, practices, and activities
d. Eliminate institutional discrimination
e. Integrate an accurate portrayal of the roles and contributions of all groups throughout history across curricula, particularly groups who have been underrepresented historically
f. Identify how prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination have limited the roles and contributions of individuals and groups, and how these limitations have challenged and continue to challenge our society
g. Eliminate subtle practices that favor the education of one student over another on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identification, disability, ethnicity, or religion
h. Encourage all members of the educational community to examine assumptions and prejudices, including, but not limited to, racism, sexism, and homophobia, that might limit the opportunities and growth of students and education employees
i. Offer positive and diverse role models in our society, including the recruitment, hiring, and promotion of diverse education employees in our public schools
j. Coordinate with organizations and concerned agencies that promote the contributions, heritage, culture, history, and special health and care needs of diverse population groups
k. Promote a safe and inclusive environment for all.

The Association encourages its affiliates to develop and implement training programs on these matters. (1996, 2006)

B-24. Alternative Programs for At-Risk and/or Students With Special Needs

The National Education Association recognizes that there must be increased development and maintenance of alternative programs to meet the needs of at-risk and/or students with special needs, pre-kindergarten through adult. The Association recommends early and appropriate identification and placement of these students. Teachers, related service providers, and administrators should receive necessary

training in diagnostic processes and alternative methods of teaching and learning. Appropriate training should also be provided to education support professionals. In addition, parents/guardians and other school community members should be encouraged to acquire the training to effectively meet the needs of these students.

Programs should emphasize a broad range of activities for responding to students' differing behavioral patterns, interests, needs, cultural backgrounds, and learning styles. These programs must be evaluated on stated objectives and standards. Teachers in these programs must have a major role in designing the objectives and evaluations and working with appropriate school and community personnel to execute these objectives and evaluations.

The Association believes that at-risk students who are assigned to an alternative placement due to discipline issues should be required to exhibit regular attendance and adequate academic and behavioral progress, in accordance with planned interventions for the student's individual needs, prior to their return to a regular educational setting.

The Association also believes that the rights of students who are protected under the provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Americans with Disabilities Act must be preserved.

The Association urges its affiliates to seek adequate compensation, planning time, materials, and facilities for all education professionals involved in these programs.

The Association supports the efforts of its affiliates to negotiate and legislate for the training of teachers seeking additional certification and hiring of an increased number of teachers with education in special areas.

In higher education settings, faculty and education support professionals who are working with students with special needs should be provided with appropriate resources to accommodate these students' special requirements.

The Association encourages its state affiliates to seek legislation that would require any person offering services to remediate, correct, or ameliorate reading, speech, language, behavioral, emotional, or learning disabilities, or related problems to be licensed under regulations of each state's department of public instruction or other appropriate agency. (1977, 2006)

B-25. Gifted, Talented, and Creative Students

The National Education Association believes that there must be educational programs and services for gifted, talented, and creative students, and supports federal and state funding for the education of these students. The Association also believes that there must be well-developed criteria and guidelines for identifying and teaching these students. Such identification must not discriminate on any basis other than the exceptionality being identified.

The Association further believes that professional development programs in gifted and talented education must be provided for all appropriate education employees.

The Association urges its affiliates to promote the development and implementation of such services to gifted children and support for all educators working with this special needs population. (1980, 2006)

B-28. Education for All Students with Disabilities

The National Education Association supports a free, appropriate public education for all students with disabilities in a least restrictive environment, which is determined by maximum teacher and parent/guardian involvement. There must be a full continuum of placement options and services/delivery models available to students with disabilities. In order to implement federal special education legislation effectively, the Association recognizes that—

a. A fully accessible educational environment, using appropriate instructional materials, support services, and pupil personnel services, must match the learning needs of both students with and students without disabilities.
b. Student placement must be based on individual needs rather than on available space, funding, or local philosophy of a school district. Student placements must be examined on a regular basis to ensure appropriateness whereby all needed services and support will be provided and should not be made disproportionately by ethnicity or gender. Necessary building/staff modifications must be provided to facilitate such placement.
c. General and special education teachers, pupil personnel and related service providers, and education support professionals who work with the student, and administrators, parents/guardians, and the student, as appropriate, should have input in the development of the individualized education program (IEP) and must have access to the IEP.
d. General and special education teachers, pupil personnel and related service providers, education support professionals, and administrators, parents/guardians, and students, as appropriate, must share in implementing the IEP. Prior to implementation, all necessary educational materials, professional development, and supportive services must be provided.
e. Students with physical disabilities and/or medical needs requiring nursing procedures must have their medical needs met by certified/professional school nurses.
f. All impacted staff members must have an appeal procedure regarding the implementation of the IEP, especially in terms of student placement. The procedure must include the right to have the dissenting opinion recorded and attached to the IEP.
g. Suspension and expulsion policies and practices used by local education agencies must be applied consistently to both students with and students without disabilities where misconduct is shown to be unrelated to either the disabling condition or to improper placement.
h. A plan recognizing individual differences must be used in a systematic evaluation and reporting of program development.
i. Limitations must be made in class size and/or case loads, using methods such as weighted formulas, modified scheduling, and/or curriculum design to accommodate the demands of each IEP.
j. All teachers who serve students with disabilities must have scheduled access to resource personnel, instructional assistants, paraprofessionals, co-teachers, and special education teachers.
k. The student's IEP should not be used as criteria for the evaluation of education employees.
l. Communications must be maintained among all involved parties.
m. Staff must not be reduced.
n. All staff must be adequately prepared for their roles through appropriate licensing and ongoing professional development programs.
o. Incentives for participation in professional development activities should, as mandated by law, be made available for education employees.
p. Education employees, as mandated by law, must be appointed to local and state advisory bodies on special education.
q. Education employees must be allowed to take part in the U.S. Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services on-site visits to states. Education employees should be invited to these meetings.
r. Local affiliates and education employees must be recruited, trained, and involved in monitoring school system compliance with federal special education legislation.
s. Adequate released time or funded additional time must be made available so that teachers can carry out the increased demands placed upon them by federal special education legislation.
t. Collective bargaining and other means should be used to minimize the potentially severe impact on staff that results from the implementation of special education legislation.
u. Benefits for staff working with students with disabilities must be negotiated through collective bargaining agreements and must be honored.
v. Full funding must be provided by local, state, and federal governments. (1978, 2006)

B-32. Youth and Adult Training Programs

The National Education Association believes that the public schools should be involved as an equal partner with government, labor, business, agriculture, and community-based groups in youth and adult employment and training programs. The Association also believes that these programs should supplement, and not supplant, the vocational, career, and technical education programs provided in the public schools.

The Association further believes that the use of funds for and the duration of these programs should be flexible in order to accommodate the differing learning needs of students. The amount of funding should be predictable in order to facilitate year-to-year planning. These programs should provide opportunities for women, persons with disabilities, and ethnic minorities in nontraditional occupations. (1980, 2006)

B-37. Multiple World Language Education

The National Education Association believes that the acquisition of multiple world languages is a vital part of the educational experience and that those who leave school speaking more than one language will be more competitive in the global marketplace. The Association also believes that the cumulative hours of exposure to the target language during a student's educational career is the most important determinant leading to fluency and proficiency in a second language. Students should have the opportunity to acquire age-appropriate world language skills from an integrated curriculum throughout the pre-kindergarten–higher education experience.

The Association supports the maintenance of current programs and the further encouragement and development of world language instruction and international studies at all educational levels.

The Association recognizes the need for teacher preparation programs for world language teachers and supports teacher and student exchange programs. (1981, 2006)

B-39. Vocational, Career, and Technical Education

The National Education Association believes that preparation of students for vocational, career, and technical jobs should be the responsibility of secondary, adult, and higher education in collaboration with labor and business. Educational programs that ensure equal opportunity for occupational development and encourage students to consider nontraditional vocations should be developed for all students at all levels. Vocational, career, and technical education should provide a comprehensive program of lifelong learning for the training, advancement, and promotion of all students.

The Association supports vocational, career, and technical education as a

major component of education and advocates that every student have the opportunity to enroll in such classes without restrictions. To be effective, vocational, career, and technical education should be preceded by career awareness and exploration programs. These vocational, career, and technical education courses should be coordinated and integrated with traditionally academic courses. These integrated programs should be combined, when appropriate, with cooperative efforts on the part of educators and industrial and business leaders to provide school-to-work experiences for students. Organized vocational, career, and technical education programs offer a sequence of courses that are directly related to the preparation of individuals in paid or unpaid employment in current and emerging occupations. Such programs shall include competency-based applied learning that contributes to an individual's academic knowledge, higher-order reasoning and problem-solving skills, work attitudes, interpersonal and collaborative skills, general employability skills, and the occupational-specific skills necessary for economic independence as a productive and contributing member of society.

The Association also believes that adequate resources must be provided for educators to maintain, enhance, and expand quality vocational, career, and technical education programs; to procure up-to-date equipment and materials for those programs; and to prepare students for a highly technical work environment. The Association further believes that the involvement of education employees, private sector employment and training program personnel, and the labor and business communities is essential to the development of quality vocational, career, and technical education programs. The Association believes such resources should be substantially increased, not merely redistributed among states or other federal initiatives. (1976, 2006)

B-45. Environmental Education

The National Education Association believes that the environment must be protected. The Association urges the establishment and maintenance of federal wilderness areas, recreational areas, refuge areas, and designated local green areas. The Association supports educational programs that promote—

a. The concept of the interdependence of humanity and nature
b. An awareness of the effects of past, present, and future population growth patterns on world civilization, human survival, and the environment
c. The protection of endangered, threatened, and rare species
d. The protection of the Earth's finite resources
e. Solutions to environmental problems such as nonrenewable resource depletion, pollution, global warming, ozone depletion, and acid precipitation and deposition
f. The use of reusable and recyclable products and discourage the use of disposable products
g. An understanding of energy, alternative energy sources, and energy conservation
h. The use of disposal methods that do not contaminate the environment
i. The recognition of and participation in such activities as Earth Day, Arbor Day, and Energy Education Day
j. The understanding of the value of the world's ecosystems.

The Association also urges its affiliates to support environmental programs in school systems and educational institutions and supports legislation and local policies that ensure a safe and healthy environment. (1973, 2006)

B-46. Science Education

The National Education Association believes that the content in science education must be based on empirical evidence derived from the scientific method and must include the processes of that method. The Association also believes that content and curriculum must be based on the National Science Education Standards of the National Research Council (NRC) and/or the Benchmarks for Science Literacy of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). (2005, 2006)

B-49. Lifesaving Techniques

The National Education Association believes that education employees and students should be trained in basic emergency lifesaving techniques. Such training should be included in both school curriculum and staff development. The Association also believes that education employees should be provided the opportunity for training in CPR and the proper use of defibrillators. (1982, 2006)

B-62. Assessment of Student Learning

The National Education Association supports ongoing comprehensive assessment of student growth. A student's level of performance is best assessed with authentic measures directly linked to the lessons teachers teach and the materials teachers use.

The Association believes that the primary purposes of assessment are to—

a. Assist students and their parents/guardians in identifying the students' strengths and needs
b. Encourage students to become lifelong learners
c. Measure a program's effectiveness, communicate learning expectations, and provide a basis for determining instructional strategies
d. Develop appropriate learning experiences for students.

The Association also believes that no one measure should be used to determine a student's performance. Teachers should utilize a variety of measures to accurately assess student growth. All methods of assessment shall provide the necessary accommodations, modifications, and exemptions, and be free of cultural, racial, and gender biases.

The Association further believes that classroom teachers must be involved in the development of assessment systems and are best qualified to determine the criteria for assessment of students and dissemination of results. Instruments used to communicate student progress must be accurate and meaningful to students, parents, and other stakeholders. (1981, 2006)

B-68. Cell Phones and Personal Communication Devices in Schools

The National Education Association believes that schools should develop guidelines for the appropriate use of cell phones and personal communication devices during the school day. Such guidelines should promote respect for privacy, intellectual integrity, and a positive learning environment. (2006)

B-75. Home Schooling

The National Education Association believes that home schooling programs based on parental choice cannot provide the student with a comprehensive education experience. When home schooling occurs, students enrolled must meet all state curricular requirements, including the taking and passing of assessments to ensure adequate academic progress. Home schooling should be limited to the children of the immediate family, with all expenses being borne by the parents/guardians. Instruction should be by persons who are licensed by the appropriate state education licensure agency, and a curriculum approved by the state department of education should be used.

The Association also believes that home-schooled students should not participate in any extracurricular activities in the public schools.

The Association further believes that local public school systems should have the authority to determine grade placement and/or credits earned toward graduation for students entering or re-entering the public school setting from a home school setting. (1988, 2006)

C-2. Nutrition

The National Education Association believes that proper nutrition is essential to child development and student success. The Association also believes that proper nutrition must be a part of prenatal care and must continue throughout life.

The Association supports programs within the education framework that promote understanding of proper nutrition. In addition, the Association advocates efforts to develop uniform symbols that make clear to consumers which food choices promote good nutrition.

The Association further believes school food service programs must be nutritionally sound, appealing, and affordable. A choice of nutritious plant-based foods should be available. The Association also supports nutrition programs that are regulated by uniform standards, readily accessible, and are supported by public funds.

The Association believes that changes in the way public funds are allocated for school food service programs must maintain quality and appropriate levels of service as well as support additional funding, given projected increases in population and need. (1990, 2006)

C-16. Telephone and the Internet

The National Education Association believes that children should be protected from exploitation via telephone and the Internet. (1989, 2006)

C-22. School Transportation

The National Education Association believes that free transportation should be provided for all public school students residing beyond a reasonable and safe walking distance from their assigned schools, and that local school districts should provide students with transportation for all school-related activities.

All school bus personnel who are utilized to transport students should be publicly employed.

The Association also believes that, if necessary for the safety of the students, paid bus assistants should be provided. Qualified substitute drivers and/or bus assistants must be provided to transport students in the absence of members of the regular transportation staff. When traveling to all school related activities, the group's sponsor or chaperone should not be the group's bus driver.

The Association further believes in safe and orderly transportation of students. Rules, regulations, and procedures must be developed, enforced, and continually reviewed and revised to ensure it. In addition to an annual bus inspection, the proper agencies should also conduct random bus inspections. Buses that transport students, especially preschool-aged students and/or students with disabilities, should be equipped appropriately. (1977, 2006)

C-23. Comprehensive School Health, Social, and Psychological Programs and Services

The National Education Association believes that every child should have direct and confidential access to comprehensive health, social, and psychological programs and services. Such programs and services must be interactive and coordi-

nated within and between school, home, and community settings. School and community efforts must also be integrated to promote the well-being of children and youth and to build support for school and community health programs.

The Association also believes that schools should provide—

a. A healthful psychological climate and a safe physical environment
b. Food services that provide nutritious meals and that help students to select nutritionally appropriate foods.

The Association further believes that programs in the schools should provide—

a. A planned, sequential, pre-K through 12 health education curriculum that promotes sound nutrition and that includes education concerning the health risks associated with obesity and eating disorders
b. A planned, sequential, pre-K through 12 health education curriculum that integrates various health topics (such as drug abuse, the dangers of performance-enhancing dietary herbal supplements, violence, safety issues, universal precautions, and HIV education); that is taught by teachers specifically prepared to teach the subject; and that enables students to develop the essential knowledge and skills to maintain personal, family, and community health
c. A planned, sequential, pre-K through 12 physical education curriculum
d. Worksite health promotion to improve the health status of school staff to set an example for desired student behaviors.

The Association believes that services in the schools should include—

a. Counseling programs that provide developmental guidance and broad-based interventions and referrals that promote the physical and psychological health of students
b. Services that identify, diagnose, and resolve learning disabilities
c. Health services provided by a licensed professional school nurse that promote the health of students through prevention, case finding, early intervention, and remediation of specific health problems; that provide first aid and triage of illness and injuries; and that provide health counseling
d. A nurse-to-student ratio at each site that is at least one school nurse to every 750 students in the school population with adjustments to safely accommodate students with special health needs and chronic illness
e. Comprehensive school-based, community-funded student health care clinics that provide basic health care services (which may include diagnosis and treatment) to supplement school nurses
f. If deemed appropriate by local choice, family-planning counseling and access to birth control methods with instruction in their use
g. Coordination with community agencies for support and follow-up activities.

The Association also believes that all health, social, and psychological services must be provided only by appropriately licensed and certificated professional personnel. The Association further believes that education employees, parents/guardians, students, and personnel from community agencies providing services to students must be involved in the development, implementation, and coordination of these services.

The Association urges its affiliates to support legislation to provide comprehensive care to all children and supports community, state, and national efforts to coordinate these services. (1969, 2006)

C-30. Student Rights and Responsibilities

The National Education Association believes that basic student rights include the right to free inquiry and expression; due process; gender equity; freedom of association; freedom of peaceful assembly and petition; participation in the governance of the school, college, and university; freedom from discrimination; freedom from commercial exploitation, including the payment of subminimum wages; and equal educational opportunity.

The Association also believes that each of these rights carries with it a comparable responsibility. Student responsibilities include regular school attendance, conscientious effort in classroom work and assessments, and conformance to school rules and regulations that do not abrogate these rights. Students share with the administration and faculty a responsibility to develop a climate within the school that is conducive to wholesome learning and living. No student has the right to interfere with the education of other students. It is the responsibility of each student to respect the rights of each person involved in the educational process.

The Association further believes in the confidentiality of student information and opposes its dissemination to any organization or institution without the consent of the student and/or parent/guardian.

The Association believes that student rights must be safeguarded when students are involved in commercial premium campaigns and fundraising activities. (1969, 2006)

D-14. Professional Development for Teachers and Administrators

The National Education Association believes that continuous professional development is required for teachers and administrators to achieve and maintain the highest standards of student learning and professional practice. The Association also believes that professional development should—

a. Be based upon clearly articulated goals reached by consensus of the school community
b. Be designed, directed by, and differentiated to meet the needs of affected professionals at each site
c. Support teachers in meeting the needs of students
d. Be incorporated into and aligned with (not added to) professional work expectations
e. Be standards-referenced and incorporate effective practice, relevant data, and current research
f. Be supported by adequate resources
g. Be career-long, rigorous, and sustained
h. Stimulate intellectual development and leadership capacity
i. Balance individual priorities with the needs of the school and the district
j. Include an ongoing assessment and evaluation component to determine effectiveness
k. Respond to, refine, improve, and adjust the professional development according to the feedback provided by the participants
l. Provide:
   - training and ongoing support for the implementation of new and expanded programs/skills
   - training and ongoing support in the development of new and revised curricula and instructional strategies
   - time during the regular work day and work year for inquiry, research, reflection, and collaboration
   - opportunities for mentoring/peer coaching with colleagues on an ongoing basis
   - a depth of subject matter knowledge and a greater understanding of the impact of culture, gender, and learning styles
   - opportunities to assume new roles, including leadership positions
   - flexibility for the use of a variety of resources such as university-school partnerships, professional development schools, exchange programs, professional development resource centers, and cultural and business resources. (1976, 2006)

D-15. Professional Development for Education Support Professionals

The National Education Association believes that professional development should be required throughout the career of education support professionals. Professional development programs should provide equal opportunities for these employees to gain and improve the knowledge and skills important to their position and job performance. Professional development programs should ensure that appropriate education employees have a decisive voice at every stage of planning, implementation, and evaluation. The Association also believes that professional development and continuing education serve as catalysts to recruit, retain, and promote qualified education support professionals. (1998, 2006)

D-20. Education Employee Evaluation

The National Education Association believes that formal performance-based evaluations must be augmented by formative evaluation components in order to assure the continuing competency of all education employees in their respective fields.

Effective evaluation procedures supported by professional development programs will enable all education employees to keep abreast of developments in their areas of specialization. Such procedures, with sufficient resources, can help ensure job competency, identify deficiencies in performance, and provide options such as counseling, training programs, a remediation plan, and opportunities to observe peers.

If following such an evaluation and after being given sufficient time, training, and opportunity for improvement, a person is then formally reevaluated and incompetency can be documented, dismissal proceedings with guaranteed due process may be instituted. Such proceedings must be implemented by administrators/evaluators who are properly trained and held accountable for appropriate and fair evaluation systems.

The Association also believes that the use of student achievement measures (e.g., grades, standardized test scores, etc.) as criteria in the evaluation process is inappropriate.

The Association further believes that classroom teachers, without fear of discipline or negative evaluation, must be given the discretion to modify the pace of predetermined progress rates, dictated pacing guides, and mandated scripted lesson pacing charts.

The evaluation procedure should be cooperatively developed and maintained in conjunction with representatives selected by the local affiliate and should include—

a. Clear performance expectations that are specific to the job description
b. Regular observation of job performance with advance notice and discussion of evaluation visits and a timely consultation after each visit
c. A written evaluation report to be provided to the person being evaluated
d. Opportunity for a written response prior to the placement of the evaluation in the personnel file
e. An employee improvement plan that will not interfere with any earned pay increase or longevity credit
f. A provision for an alternative evaluator and/or an opportunity for an

alternative evaluation report to ensure a fair and unbiased evaluation of the education employee

g. An unbiased appeals process with an evidentiary hearing under oath.

The Association further believes that procedures for evaluation of administrators should include evaluations by education employees who are directly supervised by them.

By participating in an evaluation process, an education employee shall not waive his or her right to due process in any subsequent contractual or legal proceeding. (1969, 2006)

D-22. Evaluation and Promotion in Higher Education

The National Education Association affirms the importance of teaching in institutions of higher education and believes that research and publication should not be the only criteria on which higher education faculty are evaluated and/or promoted.

The Association also believes that its higher education members must be allowed to determine through the collective bargaining process the methods by which they are evaluated and promoted.

The Association further believes that in order to maintain high standards throughout higher education, administrators must undergo individual, periodic, and regular evaluation. The evaluation process must include input from a broad spectrum of the college/university community in order to provide a balance of perspective and evaluation effectiveness. (1986, 2006)

D-23. Promote the Retention of Career Educators

The National Education Association believes that experienced educators are valuable resources in the promotion of educational excellence. The Association also believes that experienced educators should be encouraged to remain in, or return to, the education profession. This encouragement should be accomplished through strategies consistent with NEA policy, including, but not limited to, enhanced salaries and benefits, a supportive and respectful work environment, a reasonable workload, a secure pension accompanied by retiree health care benefits, and retirement enhancements that reward extended years of service. These strategies can be achieved through bargaining, legislation, or other means. (2001, 2006)

E-3. Selection and Challenges of Materials and Teaching Techniques

The National Education Association believes that democratic values can best be transmitted in an atmosphere that does not restrain free inquiry and learning. The Association also believes that quality teaching depends on the freedom to select materials and techniques. Teachers and school library media specialists must have the right to select and use materials and techniques without censorship or legislative interference. States, school districts, and educational institutions must include teachers and faculty as full voting members on textbook and curriculum review and adoption committees. Participation must be voluntary and compensated.

The Association deplores prepublishing censorship, book-burning crusades, and attempts to ban books from school library media centers and school curricula. Challenges to the choice of instructional materials and techniques must be orderly and objective, under procedures mutually adopted by professional associations and school governing boards.

Materials in all subject areas should—

a. Include strategies that encourage student interaction
b. Be developmentally appropriate
c. Include appropriate accommodations and modifications for students with special needs
d. Be free from stereotypes
e. Address divergent points of view
f. Contain sufficient activities to teach the concepts
g. Provide for the evaluation of higher level thinking.

Instructional materials and equipment must be provided in sufficient variety and quantity to serve all students. (1969, 2006)

E-5. Development of Materials

The National Education Association believes that public school teachers and postsecondary faculty should be involved in the development and field testing of all educational materials offered for adoption or purchase by public school districts and educational institutions. Materials in all subject areas should include strategies that encourage student interaction, be developmentally appropriate, include appropriate accommodations and modifications for students with special needs, be free of stereotypes, address divergent points of view, contain sufficient activities to teach the concepts, and provide for the evaluation of higher level thinking skills.

The Association also believes that requiring the use of electronic curriculum mapping and lesson planning software via district networks and the Internet should not impose additional time burdens on teachers, and must be accompanied by adequate training and compensation. Adoption of such practices should be a collaborative effort among teachers, administrators, and local boards of education.

Where school districts and educational institutions involve teachers and faculty in the development of any educational materials, participation should be voluntary and compensated. (1984, 2006)

E-11. Professional Discretion in the Classroom

The National Education Association believes that daily contact with students as well as professional accountability place classroom teachers in the best position to address the educational needs of students.

The Association also believes that teachers are best suited to develop and deliver appropriate instructional programs that are consistent with state curriculum standards. The Association further believes that direct observation of students and analysis of data by the classroom teacher must guide instructional decisions without fear of reprisal.

The Association believes that, while programs focusing on scripted learning and pacing charts can serve as frames of reference, it is still incumbent on the classroom teacher to evaluate the efficacy of all instructional programs and to modify them when necessary in order to address the needs and facilitate the success of each student. (2006)

E-12. Intellectual Property and Access to Copyrighted Materials

The National Education Association believes that education employees should own the copyright to materials they create in the course of their employment. Ownership rights of education employees who create copyrightable materials should not prevent education employees from making appropriate use of such materials in providing educational services to their students. Employees should have the right to display, reproduce, and distribute copyrighted materials for educational purposes.

The Association also believes that students should own the copyright to materials they create in the course of their studies and, in the case of graduate students, to materials they create while working as teaching or research assistants. (1969, 2006)

F-8. Basic Contract Standards

The National Education Association believes that collective bargaining agreements between education employees, including part-time and temporary, and their employers should contain certain standard contractual concepts. The Association also believes that, in nonbargaining jurisdictions, these concepts should be incorporated into legislation, employer policy, and/or other sources that establish the terms and conditions of employment for education employees, including part-time and temporary. These concepts include—

a. A grievance procedure that terminates with final and binding arbitration
b. Just cause for any disciplinary action with guaranteed due process through final and binding arbitration and continuation of all employee rights, including full compensation and job security
c. A seniority list that is updated, published, and distributed annually
d. Layoff and recall based only on seniority as bargaining unit members, licensure/certification, and, to the extent legally permissible, affirmative action†
e. Employer-paid benefits, including but not limited to comprehensive health, life, dental, vision, and income protection insurance and employee assistance programs, that fully cover bargaining unit members, domestic partners, and their families
f. Membership in the Association or the payment of a fair-share fee as a condition of employment
g. Required posting of all vacant or newly created positions along with the right of bargaining unit members to apply for these positions
h. Unassigned preparation, planning, and travel time as applicable for all members of the bargaining unit
i. Specified class size, teaching load, and job description
j. A duty-free lunch period of not less than 30 minutes for all members of the bargaining unit
k. Nondiscriminatory, fair, and equitable treatment of bargaining unit members
l. Contractually defined procedures for evaluation and promotion
m. Released time for Association business with full pay and benefits
n. Parental/child rearing leave for employees to provide care for natural or adopted children
o. Contractually defined procedures for ensuring education employee decision making in curriculum design and related instructional management and reporting systems
p. Time during the regular work day and work year for education employees to plan, to engage in professional development, to work on curriculum and assessment, to mentor and be mentored, and to provide professional leadership
q. Salary schedules based upon preparation, professional growth, and length of service and excluding any form of merit pay except in institutions of higher education where it has been bargained
r. Placement and advancement on the salary schedule based on qualifications and number of years of experience in the profession

†See the *NEA Handbook* for the Policy Statement on Affirmative Action adopted by the 1997 Representative Assembly.

s. Extracurricular and extra-duty assignments filled on a voluntary basis and compensated at no less than the employee's regular rate of pay
t. Protection from being required to participate in community service
u. Retirement benefits based on all income derived from school employment
v. Clearly defined bargaining unit membership
w. A guaranteed safe and healthy working environment, including a secured/lockable storage space for personal belongings
x. The school calendar
y. Protection from unilateral changes in terms or conditions of employment
z. Provisions to define class loads, student contact hours, and contract hours for instructors who are involved in distance education, and to guarantee that technology and distance education are used to supplement, not supplant, employees. (1989, 2006)

F-14. Constitutional and Civil Rights—Employment Protection

The National Education Association, recognizing the continuing erosion of civil rights, reaffirms its commitment to protect the rights of all education employees. The Association believes that the constitutional rights guaranteed to all citizens shall not be abridged for public education employees. The Association also believes that all levels of government should monitor and enforce fair employment practice laws. The Association and its affiliates, working with federal, state, and local officials and agencies, shall work to promote enactment of and compliance with such laws and seek to include these rights in contractual agreements. (1991, 2006)

F-15. Continuing Employment and Fair Dismissal Practices

The National Education Association believes that security of position must be provided for all education employees through appropriate employment policies, including fair dismissal procedures. The laws and master contracts governing said procedures must afford all education employees, including probationary and substitute employees, procedural and substantive due process.

The Association also believes that state laws must provide for the continuing employment and/or tenure of state and/or local education employees and that federal laws must provide similar protection for education employees in federal schools. (1969, 2006)

F-31. Right to Privacy for Education Employees

The National Education Association believes that education employees must be guaranteed the rights of privacy. These rights must include—

a. Freedom from audio or video surveillance without the prior written permission of the individual
b. Freedom from harassment by individuals, organizations, or businesses due to unauthorized release or sale of employee records
c. Protection from exploitation via telephone and the Internet
d. Security of computer files, passwords, and user codes from inappropriate or unauthorized access
e. Authority to refuse a polygraph, lie detector, or other invasive method of evidence collection.

The Association also believes that fingerprinting is acceptable only for the purpose of a pre-employment or pre-licensure check for criminal records that are pertinent to education employment. The Association opposes fingerprinting as a condition of continued employment or licensure. The Association further believes that all costs of fingerprinting must be borne by the employer or licensing agency. (1999, 2006)

F-47. School Nurses

The National Education Association urges its affiliates to enroll school nurses in active membership and to seek legislation that provides licensure/certification, inclusion in collective bargaining agreements, and achievement of an appropriate school nurse-to-student ratio. Each site must have at least one school nurse to every 750 students, with appropriate adjustments to safely accommodate students with special health needs and chronic illnesses.

The Association believes that professional development programs should be available to all licensed/certified school nurses to augment their skills in delivering health care services and in dealing with students with disabilities. (1980, 2006)

H-3. The Right To Vote

The National Education Association believes that the principle of one-person—one-vote must apply at all levels of government, including the election of the President of the United States.

The Association recognizes the right to vote as a constitutional right guaranteed to all eligible citizens. The Association supports the continued maintenance of the provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

The Association also supports voting and absentee provisions that are accessible, simplified, accurate, reliable, and verifiable for all elections and further supports election administrations that provide for open, fair, secure, and publicly verifiable ballot counting.

The Association opposes all actions that encourage or result in voter disenfranchisement. The Association supports voter education programs and uniform registration requirements without restrictive residency provisions or restrictive identification requirements. (1971, 2006)

I-1. Peace and International Relations

The National Education Association recognizes the interdependence of all people. The Association believes in the ideals of peace, freedom, and human dignity based upon respect for the individual and cultural diversity. The Association urges all nations to develop treaties and disarmament agreements that reduce the possibility of war, provide for the peaceful resolution of conflicts, and guarantee the rights of nations to exist within safe and secure borders, free from the threat of pre-emptive attacks. The Association also believes that such treaties and agreements should prevent the placement of weapons in outer space.

The Association supports the principles stated in the United Nations (UN) Charter and believes that the UN furthers world peace and promotes the rights of all people by preventing war, racism, and genocide. The Association further believes that Education International contributes to peace and international relations by promoting dialogue among the world's education employees.

The Association supports the U.S. Institute of Peace, which provides publications, information, programs, training, and research data in developing peacemaking and conflict resolution skills. (1973, 2006)

I-18. Immigration

The National Education Association supports efforts to improve the immigration process, including the provision of due process, political asylum, and timely legalization without regard to national origin. The Association also supports policies that protect the integrity of the family unit. The Association believes that English and citizenship classes should be available in sufficient numbers to ensure that immigrating individuals can comply with all federal mandates for permanent residence and/or citizenship.

The Association opposes any immigration policy that denies human and/or civil rights or educational opportunities to immigrants and their children regardless of their immigration status, hinders workers' abilities to organize, imposes excessive fees and fines on those seeking legalization, or criminalizes individuals or groups who support or assist immigrants regardless of their status. The Association condemns such policies as inhumane and discriminatory. (1984, 2006)

I-56. Ethnic-Minority Educators

The National Education Association believes that multiracial teaching staffs are essential to the operation of schools. The Association deplores the current trend of diminishing numbers of ethnic-minority educators.

The Association urges local and state affiliates and appropriate governing bodies and agencies to work to achieve and maintain ethnic diversity in all categories of educational employment. The Association also urges Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) schools to actively recruit and hire ethnic-minority educators.

The Association also believes that, whenever possible and/or appropriate, elders and/or community leaders of a particular culture should be invited to share their skills and knowledge as instructors of a culturally appropriate curriculum. (1979, 2006)

J-5. Student Member Participation

The National Education Association believes that eligible students should have the opportunity to join the Association. The Association also believes that students should be encouraged to participate in the Association at the local, state, and national levels. Preprofessional and leadership training should be priorities.

The Association further believes that its members should promote membership in the NEA Student Program to all eligible students, including student teachers in members' classrooms, and provide opportunities for community outreach, professional development, and political action. The Association believes that advisors of NEA Student chapters should be members of the Association.

The Association believes that state affiliates should facilitate the establishment of student chapters in all higher education institutions that offer teacher preparation programs.

The Association also believes that local and state affiliates should collaborate with student programs in order to facilitate the transition from student to professional membership status within the Association so that Student members become involved in the activities and leadership pathways of the professional Association and its affiliates. (1991, 2006)

J-7. Promotion of Teaching as a Career Choice

The National Education Association supports the establishment of organizations involving students interested in the field of education as a profession. The Association believes that its state and local affiliates should promote the establishment of such organizations at all age levels and encourage its members to serve as advisers.

The Association also believes that state and local affiliates should strive to build cooperative relationships and partnerships with government, business, and community leaders to promote the field of education as a profession and as a vital role in every community. (1980, 2006)

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61 **Books by NEA Members** An easy introduction to "5-a-day color way" nutrition.
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64 **Take Note** Free online algebra diagnostics help students learn in English and Spanish.
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65 **Diversity Calendar** While you're observing Hispanic Heritage Month, acquaint your students with the delights of Mexican hot chocolate.
66 **On the Web** A trio of resources helps economics and finance teachers introduce students to the art and science of money.
66 **On TV** The man who changed modern science irrevocably is profiled in *Biography*.

Deadline Approaching for The NEA Foundation's October Grant Review

APPLICATIONS ARE DUE BY OCTOBER 15, 2006, FOR BOTH THE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT GRANTS AND THE LEARNING & LEADERSHIP GRANTS. Recipients will be notified by March 15, 2007. Grants fund activities for 12 months from the award date.

THE NEA FOUNDATION
www.neafoundation.org

Student Achievement (formerly *Innovation Grants*) and *Learning & Leadership Grants* are available for all subjects, including the arts, literacy, mathematics, science, and technology. Grant amounts are $5,000 for *Student Achievement Grants* and either $2,000 (individual) or $5,000 (group) for *Learning & Leadership Grants*.

Through the years, the NEA Foundation has funded over 1,600 grants nationwide to public school educators. Read about recent projects at the Foundation's Web site, and submit your own ideas! Practicing K–12 public school teachers, education support professionals, and higher education faculty and staff are all encouraged to apply. New, improved guidelines and applications make it easier than ever to apply!

Visit **www.neafoundation.org** today for more information, including guidelines and applications. Or call 202-822-7840.

NEA URBAN GRANTS

NEA's Urban Grants Program supports local affiliates in the development of education reform leadership programs for preK–12/graduate school faculty and education support professionals. Each year, NEA awards 25 Urban Grants in the amount of $5,000 each to local affiliates to help support them with these programs. NEA Constituent Relations administers the grants and looks for proposals that contribute to restoring public confidence in public education by reflecting some aspect of NEA's Strategic Priorities.

NEA local affiliates of 500 members or more who are listed with the NEA membership office, or the largest local NEA affiliate of any state regardless of membership number, are eligible to apply.

Applicants must submit a proposal postmarked no later than **September 30, 2006,** to NEA Constituent Relations/NCUEA Office, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC, 20036. The Constituent Relations staff will correspond with applicants, as well as their respective state Association and regional office, notifying them of receipt of the proposal.

For information on applying, selection criteria, and the review process, visit **www.nea.org/teachers/urbangrants.html**.

2007 DISNEY TEACHER AWARDS

Each year Disney presents innovative preK–12 teachers with the Disney Teacher Awards in celebration of their creativity, innovative teaching methods, and ability to inspire students while actively engaging them in learning.

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Each honoree receives $10,000 from the Walt Disney Company and a trip to Disneyland in Anaheim, California, for a week of festivities that includes an awards gala, professional development, and fun in the theme park. In addition, each honoree's school will receive $5,000 from Disney.

Nominations will be accepted through October 15, 2006.

To learn more about the awards or to nominate someone, see the Disney Web site at **http://disney.go.com/disneyhand/learning/teacherawards/**.

GRANTS TEACH STUDENTS TO BE 'GOOD NEIGHBORS'

Funded by the State Farm Companies Foundation, 100 Good Neighbor Service-Learning Grants of $1,000 each are available from Youth Service America for teachers, youth (ages 5–25), and school-based service-learning coordinators to implement service-learning projects for National & Global Youth Service Day, April 20-22, 2007.

The grants enable youth and educators to bring the positive benefits of service-learning to more young people across America. Service-learning helps youth build stronger academic skills, foster civic responsibility, and develop leadership ability. Grant applications must be received by mail by October 16, 2006 (available to U.S. applicants only). For more information, visit the Web site at **www.ysa.org/awards**.

GRAPH YOUR WAY TO A GRANT

Full-time science teachers from elementary to college level are eligible to apply for the Vernier Software & Technology/National Science Teachers Association Technology Award. Vernier will provide up to seven awards, each valued at $3,000, for educators who demonstrate innovative uses of data-collection technology using a computer, graphing calculator, or other hand-held device in the science classroom.

Awards will be given to one elementary teacher, two middle school teachers, three high school teachers, and one college-level educator. Winners will receive a $1,000 cash award, $1,000 in Vernier equipment, and $1,000 toward travel and expenses to attend NSTA's National Convention in 2007. Entries are due by October 15, 2006.

Applications must include the application form, an abstract of the program, a copy of an actual lab activity, a vita, and letters of support. Information, materials, and guidelines are available online at at **www.vernier.com/grants**.

BOOKS BY NEA MEMBERS

CRUNCHING CARROTS, *NOT* CANDY/ BATANEANDO ZANAHORIAS, *NO* DULCES

By Judy Slack

This bilingual picture book teaches kids how to eat healthily by introducing them to "5-a-day color way" nutrition. Beginning with red (e.g., tomatoes, apples) and proceeding through green (asparagus, broccoli), yellow (carrots, sweet corn), blue (blueberries, eggplant), and white (mushrooms, garlic), readers learn how to make balanced food choices at a glance. Each page includes a Spanish translation. Ages 7–10. 36 pp. $17.95 To order, visit www.crunchingcarrotsnotcandy.com.

"L" IS FOR LIBRARY

By Sonya Terry
Illustrated by Nicole Wong

An abecedarium for book lovers introduces young children to the delights of the library while reinforcing the alphabet. Led by an orange tabby cat and four ducklings, readers explore literary genres (*B is for biography*), how to find books (*K is for keyword searches*), proper deportment (*Q is for quiet*), reference materials (*T is for thesaurus*), and everything else they need to know to mine the riches of the library. Charming illustrations conjure the special pleasures found only in the presence of books. PreK–2. 32 pp. $16.95 from UpstartBooks. To order, call 1-800-448-4887.

PARASITES: LATCHING ON TO A FREE LUNCH

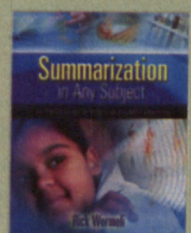
By Paul Fleischer

Fleas, lice, aphids, tapeworms, plus many other small creatures and plants that feed off of other living things—for example, us—are the subject of this fascinating and eye-opening book. (And speaking of eyes, watch out for loa loa, or eyeworm.) Nicely illustrated with photographs, illustrations, and diagrams, this is a quick and informative introduction to the science of parasitology, good for any young person with a leaning toward biology or a high "ick quotient." Be prepared for vivid images. Ages 10–12. 112 pp. $27.93 from Twenty-First Century Books. Visit www.lernerbooks.com to order.

SUMMARIZATION IN ANY SUBJECT: 50 TECHNIQUES TO IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING

By Rick Wormeli

Trying to get students to follow every word—whether spoken or on the page—is no easy task. You might want to teach them how to break down information into bite-size pieces. The author gives numerous examples of how to help your students identify the important information in almost any lesson material. For teachers of grades 3–12. 225 pp. $29.95 from the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. To order, go to http://shop.ascd.org.



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To receive a grant, your idea doesn't have to change the world. Just your little corner of it.

Shawn Turner and Patricia Renn, teachers in Borden, Indiana, had an innovative plan for integrating science instruction with real-world experience. The NEA Foundation gave them funding to make it happen. Your idea could be grant worthy, too. Visit us online to learn more. Applications are now being accepted for the October 15th deadline.

The NEA Foundation

www.neafoundation.org
202.822.7840

Take Note

Funding Available for Indoor Air Quality Training

Through a 2006 Representative Assembly New Business Item and a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the NEA Health Information Network (NEA HIN) will provide funding to send up to 20 teams of NEA members and UniServ staff to the 7th annual EPA Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) Tools for Schools National Symposium and 4th annual NEA HIN Pre-Symposium training, held **December 6–9** in Washington, D.C.

Each year teachers, education support professionals, UniServ staff, school board officials, administrators, and others attend the conference to discuss improving the IAQ in our nation's schools. The conference focuses on EPA's IAQ Tools for Schools program—a nationwide initiative that helps school employees assess, resolve, and prevent IAQ problems and reduce exposure to asthma triggers in schools. Innovative workshops are offered on conducting school walkthroughs, mold remediation, pest control, radon, material selection, and more. Building on last year's success, NEA HIN, a co-sponsor of the Symposium, will once again conduct a Pre-Symposium IAQ training to address IAQ issues from the union perspective.

To find out how you can apply, visit www.neahin.org.

Recruiting Teachers: Download a Free Documentary Online

Award-winning director Davis Guggenheim's documentary *TEACH* is now available free online. This half-hour film follows the challenging and rewarding experiences of four first-year public school teachers. Produced for use as a powerful recruitment tool for schools of education, public libraries, community colleges, and organizations that support teaching, the film can reach many teachers in the making—with your help. Active Voice, a non-profit organization, has worked with the producers to launch a Web site that features:

- The capacity to stream and download *TEACH* online
- Links to organizations that offer guidance and information to potential teachers
- Links to schools and organizations featuring *TEACH* on their Web sites and otherwise promoting the program
- Background information about the production of the film.

For more information, visit www.teachnow.org.

400 Years of American Tradition

In 2007, Virginia's Jamestown will commemorate its 400th anniversary as the first permanent English settlement in North America. The traditions established at Jamestown, including representative government, the rule of law, free enterprise, and cultural diversity, form the basis of American life.

NEA and the Virginia Education Association are pleased to help sponsor this event, which honors the impact and contributions of all parties—European, African-American, and Native American—to the founding of the Jamestown settlement.

There are many opportunities to participate in the 18 months of events, and resources are planned that educators will find especially valuable.

On **November 9, 2006**, students from all 50 states and across the globe will gather at Jamestown to participate in the National Teach-In webcast, *JAMESTOWN LIVE! Experience the Journey that Changed the World*. This webcast will bring to life the history and legacy of Jamestown to a nationwide online audience of students in grades 4–11.

You can register your school to participate in this event at www.jamestownjourney.org, where you'll also find lesson plans

GET READY FOR NATIONAL MULTICULTURAL DIVERSITY DAY

For more than a decade, educators have celebrated National Multicultural Diversity Day (NMDD) on the third Monday in October (this year's event is **October 16**). Created by Cleorah Scruggs, a fourth-grade teacher in Flint, Michigan, the day was adopted as a national event by the 1993 Representative Assembly to "increase awareness of the tremendous need to celebrate our diversity collectively."

This year, you can get involved, too—just be creative! Start by sharing cultural information with your class about yourself, then introduce students to multicultural issues by inviting a local expert to talk on diversity. You can also sing songs that celebrate diversity and ask students to bring in items or food representative of their ethnic heritage to share with classmates.

To help educators share ways to celebrate diversity year round, NEA sponsors an electronic discussion board at **www.nea.org/cs/forum.jspa?forumID=55**. Or visit **www.nea.org/readacross/multi/index.html** for an exploration of multiculturalism and children's literature, including interviews with children's authors and tips on building a multicultural library.

ILLUSTRATION: GETTY IMAGES

What a Reading Party!

In 2007, join the nation's biggest reading celebration as NEA's Read Across America toasts its 10th anniversary and the Cat in the Hat turns 50!

Go to the Web site at at www.nea.org/readacross to order your new Read Across America resource kit; tell us your favorite children's book and teen book; and fill us in on your plans to make the 2007 Read Across America celebration one for the record books.

While you're there, turn your Web browser to NEA's Books Across America at www.nea.org/booksacross to find out how you can raise funds and organize book drives to help Gulf Coast public school libraries.

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and other K–12 resources in subject areas ranging from archaeology to social studies, all free of charge. For information about the anniversary, including ideas for participating and a list of activities, visit www.Americas400thanniversary.com.

Free Algebra Diagnostics Online

It's September, and math teachers across the country are testing students to find out what knowledge has been retained and lost. AOL can help with free Web-based diagnostic tools.

Originally created to help California students prepare for the statewide STAR exam, the **AOL Algebra 1 Review** is available to all teachers, parents, and students to assess skills and provide supplemental instruction to fill learning gaps.

The tools are available in both Spanish and English, eliminating the language barrier for native Spanish speakers, and can be used anytime from any computer, whether at home, school, the library, or other community facility.

In addition to diagnostics and testing, it also features multimedia explanations that show students how to solve concepts and instruct them in how to approach similar problems in the future. Unique "white board" technology includes audio, graphics, and animation to address multiple learning styles. Students can work at their own pace until they have mastered each topic.

Go to www.aolalgebrareview.com to register for free.

Heads Up from NEA Member Benefits

LIMITED-TIME OPEN ENROLLMENT PERIOD—SEPTEMBER ONLY!

THIS IS A SPECIAL OPPORTUNITY for NEA members made available by the NEA Members Insurance Trust. For the first time ever and for one month only, you can enroll for $25,000 of guaranteed issue life insurance coverage through the NEA Group Term Life Insurance Plan.

The beauty of this opportunity is that there are no medical questions asked! To qualify for this exclusive offer, you must be an NEA member who is actively working and not currently participating in another NEA-sponsored life insurance program. To enroll, simply go to **www.neamb.com/openenrollment** anytime from **September 1 to September 30, 2006**. For more details, see our display ad on pages 40-41. But hurry—don't let this exclusive opportunity to help protect your loved ones pass you by.

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WHETHER YOU'RE A NEW OR VETERAN ASSOCIATION MEMBER, you have access to consumer resources that can help make life better for you and your family.

Go online to **www.neamb.com** and peruse the Tools and Tips section to read timely financial articles, view educational videos, and use handy calculators to plan for a mortgage (or for your retirement).

Plus, every month, you can enter to win one of the valuable prizes offered in the NEA Member Benefits Web Site Giveaway. During September, register to win one of three $100 Barnes & Noble Gift Cards—you can use it at all Barnes & Noble retail locations or, better yet, on the Internet through the NEA Bookstore at **www.neamb.com** and get an additional 5 percent off your purchase.

NO NEA MEMBER DUES DOLLARS ARE USED TO DEVELOP OR PROMOTE NEA MEMBER BENEFITS PROGRAMS.

PHOTO: STOCK.XCHNG; ILLUSTRATION: GETTY IMAGES

Say 'Know' to Child Labor

In America, we believe that children have the right to live free from economic exploitation and to receive a free and meaningful education. Not all children are so fortunate.

The International Center on Child Labor and Education (ICCLE) works to mobilize efforts to protect and promote the rights of all children worldwide.

Visit ICCLE's Web site at www.knowchildlabor.org to find out more about child labor facts and myths, and explore links between child labor, education, and poverty. You'll also find teacher resources including curriculum, lesson plans, and information about workshops, plus true stories of child workers turned advocates. Your students will enjoy the poetry and art, and be inspired by the student action plans to build community knowledge of child labor issues. There's also a Youth Action Toolkit designed just for them.

So stop by the site to find practical answers to the frustrating question, "What can I do?"

"Privatizing Social Security will hurt many NEA members, and continuation of unfair offsets that deny Social Security benefits will hurt many more. Join me in fighting Social Security privatization and eliminating offsets by giving to The NEA Fund for Children and Public Education."

We can't gamble with our future

Contribute to The NEA Fund For Children & Public Education. Go to www.neafund.org.

THE NEA FUND for Children & Public Education

DIVERSITY CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER

SEPTEMBER—LIBRARY CARD SIGN-UP MONTH
They may have paper, they may have pens, but if your students don't have library cards, they're not fully equipped to learn. And it's free!

SEPTEMBER 4—LABOR DAY
Remember those who risked being fired or injured in order to organize the first Labor Day parades. Labor unions remind us that workers create prosperity for *all*.

SEPTEMBER 15–OCTOBER 15—HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH
This observance honors the histories, cultures, and contributions of citizens who share the common language ancestry of Spanish. For more, go to www.nea.org/readacross/hispanic.html.

SEPTEMBER 18—CONSTITUTION DAY (OBSERVED)
This day is part of National Constitution Week. Go to www.justicelearning.org/ConstitutionDay/index.asp to register for free resources. You must register by 9/8.

SEPTEMBER 23—RAMADAN BEGINS
Ramadan is a holy time when Muslims worldwide fast and honor the revelation of the Koran to the prophet Muhammad. The observance ends October 22.

OCTOBER

OCTOBER 2—YOM KIPPUR
The most solemn day of the Jewish year, and one of the most important, the "Day of Atonement" is typically spent at synagogue in fasting, reflection, and prayer.

OCTOBER 6—GERMAN AMERICAN DAY
Celebrate the culture, achievements, and contributions of American citizens of German ancestry.

OCTOBER 9—COLUMBUS DAY
This day commemorates Christopher Columbus' sighting of the New World. The Mariners' Museum has information about his voyages at www.mariner.org/educationalad/ageofex/columbus.php.

OCTOBER 9—ANNIVERSARY OF BENJAMIN BANNEKER'S DEATH
Find out about this versatile Black mathematician and astronomer—who wrote his own almanac—at www.americaslibrary.gov/cgi-bin/page.cgi/jb/colonial/banneker_1.

OCTOBER 9–13—NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH WEEK
Good nutrition is vital to student learning. Visit http://docs.schoolnutrition.org/meetingsandevents/nslw2006/index.asp for information, activities, and more.

Diversity Recipe

MEXICAN HOT CHOCOLATE

Chocolate is native to Central America. The Aztecs combined it with honey, nuts, seeds, spices, and chile. Europeans later adapted the recipe using milk and sugar.

Your students will enjoy trying Mexican hot chocolate—rich, dark, and redolant of cinnamon. It can usually be found in the Hispanic foods section of large grocery stores. You'll also need a wooden whisk, called a molinillo (mo-li-nee-yo). (You can use a regular whisk, but it won't be as much fun!) This recipe serves 2.

Ingredients
2 cups milk
1 disk Mexican sweet chocolate*
1 vanilla bean, split lengthwise

Warm the milk and chocolate in a saucepan. Scrape the seeds from the vanilla bean and add them with the bean to the milk. Stir until the chocolate is melted and the mixture just begins to boil. Remove from heat, strain, and beat with the molinillo until it froths. *¡Salud!*

**Ibarra is a popular brand of Mexican chocolate. If you can't find it, use regular dark hot chocolate mix and add cinnamon to taste.*

PHOTO: STOCK.XCHNG

On the Web

TEACHING THE ART AND SCIENCE OF MONEY

Three Web sites for teachers offer business and finance resources for the classroom.

Teaching Economics As If People Mattered from United for a Fair Economy (UFE) presents five learning modules for teaching economics: Defining Economics, The Ten Chairs (distribution of wealth in the United States), Savings Accounts & Stocks, Born on Third Base (acquiring wealth), and Signs of the Times (gauging economic success). Each module includes learning objectives, key concepts and terms, a downloadable lesson, an animated presentation, articles and resources, a mapping to standards, and a place to offer feedback about the lesson. To learn more, visit **www.teachingeconomics.org.**

The National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB) Young Entrepreneur Foundation (YEF) developed its *Entrepreneur-in-the-Classroom* program to bring real-life stories of entrepreneurs to schools, enabling students to learn first-hand about the risks and rewards of operating a small business. Teachers create classroom laboratories where high school students learn about being their own boss. All three modules contain teaching notes, overheads, activities, and quizzes. Access to curriculum materials requires free registration. To learn more, visit **www.nfib.com/object/IO_27244.html.**

JumpStart: Financial Smarts for Students offers some materials that can be downloaded for free: "12 Principles That Every Young Person Should Know" provides short lesson plans on teaching students about money. The Clearinghouse offers materials that you can order by written request and a few that can be downloaded. Its financial curriculum materials are available for purchase only, including two "money savvy" curriculums—one for teaching personal finance to kindergarten through fifth grade and the other for teaching early high school age students. Note: these materials are scripted. For more information, visit **www.jumpstart.org.**

On TV

NICK NEWS WITH LINDA ELLERBEE: CHILDREN OF THE STORM

Nickelodeon, September 1 & 29, 6 a.m. ET/PT.
The story of Hurricane Katrina's devastation is told through the eyes and words of the children of New Orleans, who are still angry, sad, and scared—but hopeful, looking to the future and helping rebuild the community that gave them their identity and spirit. Tape and use in the classroom for 10 years.

VOCES

PBS, September 2–November 25, Saturdays at 10 p.m. ET. Check local listings.

Timed to coincide with Hispanic Heritage Month, Latino Public Broadcasting presents a new fall series showcasing the rich spectrum of Latino-American culture through 13 documentaries and musical specials. Each episode is introduced by acclaimed actor Edward James Olmos and features entertainers, athletes, and personalities including Jimmy Smits, Raquel Welch, Pancho Gonzalez, and many others.

MODERN MASTERS

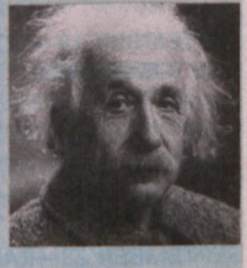
HGTV, September 4 & 18, 5 a.m. ET/2 a.m. PT.
This series travels around the United States for a look into the workshops, techniques, and secrets of America's master craftspeople, including methods that each person employs to bring stone, metal, glass, and wood to life. This two-part episode profiles seven acclaimed Hispanic-American artisans who create beautiful, one-of-a-kind pieces that speak to their heritage. Can be taped and used in the classroom for 10 years.

WIDE ANGLE: TIME FOR SCHOOL

PBS, September 5, 9 p.m. ET. Check local listings.
More than 100 million children have never spent a day in school (more than two-thirds of these are girls), but governments worldwide have set a goal for free and compulsory education by 2015. To document progress, this program travels to schoolrooms around the globe, offering a fascinating glimpse into the lives of diverse children—all taking their first steps into an uncertain future.

BIOGRAPHY: ALBERT EINSTEIN—HOW I SEE THE WORLD

A&E, September 19, 7 a.m. ET/PT.
Part of a series profiling political leaders, artists, and other famous figures, this episode features the Nobel Prize-winning physicist, who also worked for international peace and world government. Can be taped and used in the classroom for two years. Teaching materials are available at www.aetv.com/class/teach.



On TV listings are provided by KIDSNET, a national resource for children's media in Washington, D.C., www.kidsnet.org, and by Cable in the Classroom's Access Learning *magazine at www.ciconline.org.*

PHOTO TOP RIGHT: TRAVEL AGENT; ON TV PHOTOS CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: HARDLINE FILMS; LIBRARY OF CONGRESS; PBS

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CircusFit Program Highlights

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- The **CircusFit** program was designed to help educators meet state learning standards specific to physical education, while also incorporating vocabulary-building, character education and science learning opportunities.
- Youth can participate in the **CircusFit** program as a way to meet the President's Challenge requirements.

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Remote Control

How technology could change who's in charge of teaching.

BY GLEN BLEDSOE

It's natural that our vision of educational technology is shaped by how we use it. If we blog, we believe blogging is a powerful incorporation of computers into teaching and learning. If our students publish Web pages, videocasts, podcasts, or wikis, we believe each tool enables our students in new ways.

We are not the only ones, however, who are watching technology and imagining new ways of incorporating it into education. While teachers are singing "create, create, create!" others are chanting "measure and control!"

With growing pressure to raise test scores, administrators will take a more active role in what goes on in our classrooms. They will want to know what you teach, when you teach it, how well you teach it, and how your lessons connect with standards.

A 20th-century principal collected paper-based lesson plans on Friday and reviewed them over the weekend. But soon you will craft your plans digitally on the school's network, where they might be viewed, along with your meetings and professional development calendar and a record of your parent contacts, at any time without your knowledge.

"NUMBERS DON'T REVEAL the real story behind the eyes of each of your students."

That's just the start. Your class demographic profile, median family income, the number of free and reduced-price lunches, ethnic makeup, attendance, overdue library books, past test scores, work samples, and what students buy to eat at school will all be part of the data sweep. Administrators will use technology to aid them in pursuit of this knowledge, believing that the more that is known about a student, the better he or she can be educated.

Glen Bledsoe believes that he, not some outsider using computer records, should decide how to teach his students.

Strictly speaking, this is not surveillance. The point is not to spy on individual teachers, but to conduct remote analysis and, more precisely, remote control. Mathematical models will search for trends and make predictions of success or failure in student learning. Increasingly, decisions about how you will run your class will be made from the principal's office, district office, or perhaps even farther afield at the state or even national level. An agency bureaucrat—or possibly a piece of data-driven software—will analyze and direct your instruction. He, she, or it will identify your students' weaknesses and create worksheets or online sessions to remedy them. He, she, or it may even sample video of your lesson presentations and send you a script with the precise words you must say to improve instruction, along with suggested professional development based on your instructional weaknesses.

You will start your computer upon arrival at school each morning and find your instructions for the day waiting for you. Like a good soldier, your part is not to question but to obey. You will be measurable. Technology will at last make teachers accountable.

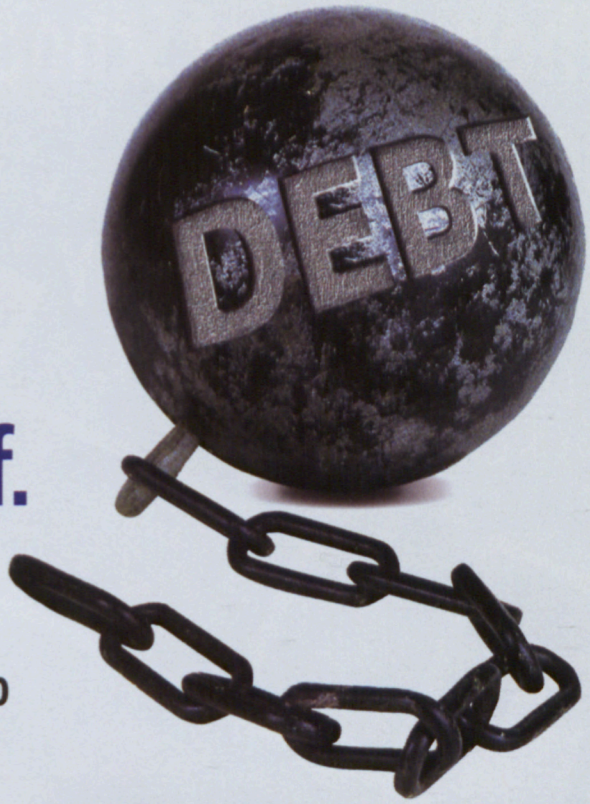
A nightmare vision, yes, but will it come true? I've described nothing that isn't technically possible today. School districts already store this kind of information, and I have had chilling discussions with administrators whose vision is to use technology exactly as I've described.

Every teacher would like to know what students' weaknesses are, but no teacher wants to have his or her classroom managed by someone (or something) who has never set foot in the room. The numbers don't reveal the real story behind the eyes of each of your students. How many times have we seen siblings with identical backgrounds but completely different academic abilities and needs? The data can't adjust the lesson when your class comes in the door noisy, abused, hungry. It can't hear your students and interpret their mindset the way humans can. Students must be treated as individuals, and teachers who face them daily must make the decisions—not a software program.

Technology can be a powerful tool for learning, but we must decide how it will and won't be used. We must not let others decide for us.

Glen Bledsoe teaches fourth grade at Molalla Elementary School in Molalla, Oregon, a small community south of Portland. Read his online column in the Members and Educators area of NEA's Web site at www.nea.org.

PHOTO: DIANE STEVENSON



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$10,000	$467	$322	$250	$207	$178	N/A
$15,000	$698	$482	$374	$309	$266	$236
$25,000	N/A	$800	$621	$513	$442	$391

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††Eligible family members include parents, spouse (or domestic partner) and children.

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— California high school teacher

"The kids at our school had a great time and are eager to try it again!"*— Oregon elementary school teacher*

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